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THE

RELIGIOUS MONITOR,

AND

EVANGELICAL REPOSITORY:

DEVOTED TO THE PRINCIPLES OF THE REFORMATION, AS SET FORTH IN
THE FORMULARIES OF THE WESTMINSTER DIVINES, AND
WITNESSED FOR BY THE

ASSOCIATE SYNOD OF NORTH AMERICA.

EDITED BY C. WEBSTER,

Pastor of the First Associate Congregation, Philadelphia.

VOLUME XVI.

Thus saith the Lord, Stand ye in the ways, and see, and ask for the old paths, where 's the good
way, and walk therein, and ye shall find rest for your souls.—Jer. vi. 16.

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THE
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DECEMBER, 1839.

ART. I.—*To the Congregations, settled and vacant, under the inspection of the Associate Synod of North America.*

DEAR BRETHREN,—

The importance of united effort in temporal matters of a public nature, or in any operations too extensive for individual enterprise, is well understood and universally acknowledged. And the necessity of some form of government, in order to effect such united effort and to give it steadiness and efficiency, is no less manifest. These principles are recognised in the organization of all governments, whether civil or ecclesiastical. Among the various objects for which Christ has appointed a government in his church, is the uniting of our exertions in conformity to his revealed will. The Associate Synod you acknowledge as a court of Christ to which you owe subjection and obedience in the Lord. They have judged it necessary to create certain funds, to which they call you to contribute; and at their last meeting, they appointed us, the undersigned, to address you on this subject. These funds are the Bible, the missionary, the student's and the Synod's funds. To some, perhaps, one or more of these objects may appear unnecessary, or of too little importance to command their liberality. But, though church members should judge for themselves respecting the lawfulness, the importance, and the necessity of the objects for which they are called to contribute, yet they should remember that they, generally, have not such means as the Synod possesses of knowing the necessity and importance of them. The Synod's business is to watch over the interests and necessities of the church; they receive communications and petitions from its different quarters; they feel, by their inability to answer the many urgent and pressing calls for supply of gospel ordinances, the necessity of farther means of furnishing the supply which is needed; and, moreover, we may expect that Christ will especially instruct them in their duty, and impress their minds with a sense of its obligation and importance, while they are attending to it as his appointed servants. "Where two or three are gathered together in my name, there am I in the midst of

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them." (Matt. xviii. 20.) These considerations lay solemn obligations on you to reflect seriously, to seek instruction, and to receive, with respect and a spirit of obedience, the judgment of Synod. We propose to call your attention to the necessity and importance of the above objects by a few words on each of them.

1. The Bible fund. You are, no doubt, aware that very many, even in this favoured land, are destitute of the Bible. And though it is, perhaps, true that there are none so poor that they cannot buy, yet the fact is they do not. And if irreligion and insensibility prevent them from purchasing a Bible, the evil is as real as though they were prevented by poverty, and they are no less pitiable. Their families, too, are, by their insensibility, deprived of the bread of life. We need not urge on your consideration the necessity of the Bible to every soul, but we ask you to reflect on the above facts, and on the pitiable condition, not only of thoughtless parents, but of the numerous children who are in utter ignorance of their spiritual state and of the way of salvation, of their duties and their privileges, and who are insensible of their loss by want of means of instruction. If we neglect the condition of such when we have the means of supplying them, we are partaking with their parents in that unbelief and insensibility which are depriving them of such a necessary and precious blessing as religious instruction. Prov. xxiv. 11, 12, is as applicable to this case as to witness-bearing. "If thou forbear to deliver them that are drawn unto death, and those that are ready to be slain; if thou sayest, Behold, we knew it not; doth not he that pondereth the heart consider it? and he that keepeth thy soul, doth not he know it? and shall not he render to every man according to his works?" The object of the Synod is to supply the destitute with the Bible; and also to make copies of it more abundant in irreligious, or in poor and needy families. You are aware that the Associate Synod do not take part in the operations of the American Bible Society, and aware of the reasons why they do not. As they are able to organize and carry on a Bible Society, they wish to take no part, less or more, in the distribution of the Apocrypha; and they wish to furnish the Bible to the destitute with the Psalms in metre, that, by such a provision, the untaught may not be left under a temptation to adopt a human ordinance of psalmody. When the ignorant receive the Bible, and find that it contains commands to worship God by singing his praise, but find nothing in it prepared for that use, what can we expect but that a human psalmody in readiness will be accepted by them as the very thing intended by the Bible commands? But, as God did furnish his church with the matter of praise, and that matter in the form and order necessary for that part of divine worship, so the same reasons which require a translation of the scriptures, require the translation of the psalms into that form in which they can be sung, or in which the instructions and commands respecting them may be obeyed.

2. The missionary fund. There are many places calling for gospel ordinances, where there is not yet ability to support them, but which, by missionary assistance and encouragement, might soon have a fixed dispensation of the gospel among them, as experience, in many instances, warrants us to expect. And those places, in turn, may soon increase the strength of the church, not only by maintain-

ing the same pure profession, but, also, by assisting in the spread and establishment of the gospel in other places. Though, in some cases, it may be the duty of a few insulated applicants to remove to those parts where gospel ordinances are already enjoyed stately, yet, in general, this is not to be desired; and, perhaps, it is seldom their duty to remove for sake of the gospel, till they have used their utmost efforts to have it fixed among them. Such efforts are the usual means, in Divine Providence, of furnishing destitute places with divine ordinances, of calling the attention of the ignorant and thoughtless to the gospel offer, and of turning them to the Lord and to his cause. But there are other occasions for missionary exertions. In many places where the grossest errors prevail, utterly perverting the gospel of Christ, there are some mourning for these errors in secret, who scarcely know of a purer dispensation for which they can apply; and many are led, by their teachers and by the multitude around them, to embrace the prevalent errors, who have not a suggestion of divine truth presented to their minds, in opposition, to lead their reflections or to correct their errors. These considerations call loudly for missionary exertions and missionary means. The apostles did not refuse to comply with a call from a few; nor did they usually wait for a call from the people, before they carried the gospel to destitute regions; nor yet did they excuse themselves from the service because the people were pleased with their errors, and contented in their ignorance and sin.

3. The student's fund. The importance of this will appear in connexion with that of the missionary fund. The Synod not only need missionary funds, but they are deficient in the numbers of their ministry. They are even unable to supply the demand for gospel ordinances among their organized vacancies, and much less are they able to establish missions abroad. It is found, too, that in such a country as ours, an increased supply of gospel ordinances is attended with even a greater increase of demand. This is a cheering and a weighty plea for speedy exertion to increase the numbers of the ministry, as by this fact God is giving indications that he is hastening the accomplishment of the blessed promise that "the earth shall be full of the knowledge of the Lord, as the waters cover the sea," and, consequently, that nothing shall "hurt nor destroy in all (his) holy mountain." (Isaiah xi. 9.) To supply the deficiency of the ministry, it is proposed to aid poor and pious young men in coming forward to the holy ministry, and to search out and encourage those of such a character, who, by poverty, are prevented from even aiming at that sacred work. It is well known that there are many promising youths of talents and piety, who wish to devote themselves to the holy ministry, and whose want of means checks every aspiration towards the work, or prevents all attempts at a preparatory course for it; and that some, who are labouring under all their difficulties to come forward, are detained for years by want of means, and the church so long deprived of their services. It is acknowledged that we should "pray the Lord of the harvest, that he will send forth labourers into his harvest." But let us remember that it is mockery to pray for a divine favour, while we neglect the means that God has made necessary, has made known to us, and has put into our power.

4. The Synod's general fund is, also, an object to which your contributions are solicited. This fund is indispensable to the necessary operations of Synod in the concerns of the church. But it is of long standing, and we trust that its necessity and importance are known to you.

Now, for all these purposes in the work of the gospel, pecuniary means are obviously necessary; and it is as obvious that they must, if obtained, come from the members of the church. To whom else, under Zion's King, can Synod look for these means? The Associate Synod is but the organ of the Associate Church. This whole church, in all her individual members, act, through the Synod, as an organ in maintaining a public profession, a public testimony, the public ordinances of Christ, and in carrying on all their concerns in a church capacity. Without this organization, appointed by Christ, and actually furnished in his providence, you could neither perform those public duties nor enjoy those public privileges. The Synod enjoy no benefit by the contributions now asked but what is common to the whole church. The Synod have the labour and care of managing these funds for the good of the church; and many of the members, individually, expend, besides their time and labour, ten or twenty fold the ordinary contribution of church members, in attending to these, with other ecclesiastical matters, in Synod. All the members of the church should, in proportion to their abilities, bear these burdens in the common cause. "If there be first a willing mind, it is accepted according to that a man hath, and not according to that he hath not. For, I mean not that other men be eased, and you burdened; but, by an equality, that now, at this time, your abundance may be a supply for their want, that their abundance, also, may be a supply for your want; that there may be equality." (2 Cor. viii. 12—14.) The requisition of contributions to the cause of religion is reasonable, equitable, and, also, divine. The temple service of old was maintained not only by voluntary contributions, but, also, by those that were positively ordained. (Ex. xxx. 12—16. Lev. xxvii. 30.) That poll tax and tithe teach us, at least, the necessity and obligation of contributions to the service of religion. The apostle's frequent injunctions of contributions for the poor teach us the same thing, as well as his declaration of the Lord's institution, "that they who preach the gospel should live of the gospel." (1 Cor. ix. 14.) Some may, perhaps, suppose that the requisition of contributions for the poor does not apply to us now, as the poor are provided for by other means not employed in the apostle's days. But this is a mistake; and the declaration that "the poor shall never cease out of the land" is as true in our age as formerly. If civil governments now take care of the poor, it is, generally, only to supply their temporal wants. Or, if they extend to them the means of education, they do not supply them with gospel ordinances, under a peculiar testimony for the cause of Christ; nor can we expect them to do it. But, if the church is now relieved, in a measure, from the burden of supplying the temporal wants of the poor, the opportunity is enlarged, and, consequently, the obligation is increased of attending to their spiritual wants.

Do any object that they have the gospel to support among themselves, and that this calls for as much as they are able to give for

religious purposes? If this statement be, indeed, strictly true, they are excusable. But this is seldom the case; and the objection is more imaginary than real. In an article of trade we may be able to say, definitely, how much we can afford to give; but it is, certainly, difficult to say, definitely, how much we are able to give for an article of necessity. The necessity of it, and our sense of its necessity, will induce us to rise as high as the demand requires. If we account the gospel necessary, it will be difficult to define the sum that we are able to give, beyond which we cannot go. If Divine Providence should make an addition to the sum which we had before given, necessary in order to the support of the gospel among us, would any one possessed of the spirit of the psalmist suffer the loss of it rather than give that addition? Could he say as Ps. xxvii. 4, "One thing have I desired of the Lord, that will I seek after; that I may dwell in the house of the Lord all the days of my life, to behold the beauty of the Lord, and to inquire in his temple." And do we rightly value divine ordinances ourselves, if we feel not for the wants of others who are destitute of them, and do not exert ourselves to supply them? With Christ, the church rejoices in the thought that "all the ends of the world shall remember and turn to the Lord, and all kindreds of the nations shall worship before him;" (Ps. xxii. 27,) and they will, accordingly, use the means of effecting this when they have opportunity.

Is it objected, that this is an age of charitable societies, and so many charities are called for that we cannot answer them all? We reply, that prudence, at least, requires us to consider which of those objects demanding our charity is most necessary; and we ought to remember that those which the Synod now proposes have the oldest and the highest claim, being included in the divine institution.

We would farther remind you, that people may have ability to bestow charities for the interest of the church; they may have a disposition to bestow them; and there may be much necessity for them, and yet they may have no opportunity of giving; no means of knowing what is needed, or of bestowing where it is needed; and no encouragement to bestow, through want of organization for uniting their exertions. To furnish such an opportunity, such information, means of bestowment, and union of effort, is a design of the divine institution of collections by the church: and such an opportunity is now furnished to you by the Synod. The objects are pointed out, the means of conveying your charities are furnished, and you have the prospect of some efficiency by mutual endeavours. That the objects presented to you are good and important, and that they are embraced in the divine ordinance of collections for the poor and for the service of religion, you will not doubt. Then, let not your plans of making gain, of hoarding wealth, or of procuring luxuries, prevent your contributions under this call. Unbelief and a carnal mind will urge the importance of our worldly objects, and diminish a sense of the importance of religious charities, or of the urgency of the demand; they will induce you to forget your dependence on God for a blessing on your worldly plans and possessions, and to feel as though your skill and diligence must command success. But, in opposition to these suggestions of unbelief, consider,

1. That all you have you owe to God; it is his before he gives it,

and it is his after you receive it. (Hos. ii. 8, 9,) "For she did not know that I gave her corn, and wine, and oil, and multiplied her silver and gold, which they prepared for Baal. Therefore will I return, and take away my corn in the time thereof, and my wine in the season thereof, and will recover my wool and my flax given to cover her nakedness."

2. You are bound to hold your possessions as subject to his demands; for, though we cannot profit God, we may serve him by aiding the poor. (Prov. xix. 17:) "He that hath pity upon the poor, lendeth unto the Lord; and that which he hath given will he pay him again."

3. Your success in even lawful plans, and your comfort by them, are dependent on God's will and providence. (Hag. i. 6:) "Ye have sown much, and bring in little; ye eat, but ye have not enough; ye drink, but ye are not filled with drink; ye clothe you, but there is none warm; and he that earneth wages, earneth wages to put it into a bag with holes."

4. God often connects our success and comfort, or the want of them, with the manner in which we employ his temporal gifts. To this purpose consider Hos. ii. 8, 9; Prov. xix. 17; Hag. i. 6, above quoted; as, also, Hag. i. 9, and ii. 15—19. In these latter passages God shows that because they neglected his house they were unsuccessful in their worldly plans, and deprived of comfort even by their enjoyments; and in their obedient attention to his house and its expenses they would be successful. Faith is necessary in order to a due impression of these truths; and a believing observance of Divine Providence will abundantly confirm them. These truths are not set before us in order to induce us to make our charities a mercenary dealing with Heaven for either temporal or spiritual favours, but in order to correct our selfish, worldly spirit; to teach us that a sinful withholding of charity will not profit; that prudent charities will not diminish our comforts; and to lead us to faith and love even in our use and management of temporal things, which prove a snare and an occasion of irreligion to many.

5. Consider that though it be a duty to provide for the future temporal wants of ourselves, our children, or the church, yet this must be done in moderation, in entire dependence on the divine blessing, in the way of doing present duty, and in taking present lawful enjoyment. This is expressly taught; Eccles. ii. 21—26, and v. 10—19. Let these passages be carefully studied, to show that attention to worldly profits in the neglect of present employment of them as God, in his providence, calls for, is really deceiving ourselves. The Lord's prayer, also, by teaching us to ask "day by day our daily bread," teaches us to put no trust in earthly treasures, nor yet to despair of a continued supply. God's providence teaches the same thing: we cannot ensure a future crop, yet we live by the yearly income from the earth. Accordingly, God has made every temporal security for future abundance or enjoyment precarious. Our children may pervert and abuse what we lay up for them; the state treasures may be employed as engines to overturn the liberties of the people; donations for the future use of the church may be employed to subserve a very different cause from that which the donors intended. Unless we can secure morality, sound principle,

and true religion in those who are, in future, to manage those treasures or donations, we can give little security by prescription. And to support the cause of God now, to support divine ordinances in their purity, and to extend the knowledge and enjoyment of these is the best method, if not the only one, of securing the standing of the church among our posterity, our intended use of donations to the church, and even our temporal comforts and privileges. Let us, then, attend to present duty.

But, in order that persuasions may be followed by action, it will be necessary that some systematic plan be adopted for effecting the above purposes, and that it be adopted without delay, not only because the duty is urgent, but lest, by delay, the subject be forgotten. Let every congregation adopt such a plan as Synod recommends, of quarterly collections; or, if they prefer it, let it be weekly. Let them appoint these collections expressly for one of the above objects at one time, and of another at another time. Or, if they prefer it, let all the above objects be included in each collection, and let the session, or the Synod, apportion the whole sum given by the congregation among those objects respectively. And, it is hoped that Presbyteries will remember the Synod's injunction, "to see that the above collections are duly attended to, and the avails duly paid over."

A. ANDERSON, }
J. P. MILLER, } Committee.

ART. II.—*Occasional Hearing*.—No. II.

BY A RULING ELDER.

BUT there is another view which we may take of the subject, which will place in a very strong light the error of those who plead for the doctrine of essentials and non-essentials, and who tell us that we should not be so strenuous about non-essential truths, but should receive into communion and fellowship all Christian professors who do not reject the essentials. And, consequently, on this principle, no member would be subject to the censure of suspension from sealing ordinances, let them fall into what error they might, provided these did not come under the class of essentials. Now, let the truths which are denominated essentials be what they may, they must be definite in number. And should any individual reject but one of these, although he believed all the rest, he could not possibly be saved; else the rejected truth could not have been an essential. So, let such a person's pretensions to religion be ever so great, it is certain that they have not yet been the subjects of regenerating grace. Therefore, according to this plan, no person should be suspended from the privileges of the church for error in doctrine, except those persons of whom it was absolutely certain that they were yet in the gall of bitterness and bond of iniquity. Now, should we adopt, in reference to sinful practices, the same method of procedure that non-essentialists would have us to observe with regard to erroneous principles, the unwarrantable lengths to which it would carry us must

be evident to all but those who will not understand, but walk on in darkness. And the writer is firmly persuaded that no satisfactory reason can be given, on their principles, why we should not. God's law is exceedingly broad, and reaches to the thoughts, purposes, and principles of the heart, as well as to the outward conduct. He has revealed to us the truths of his gospel, as well as the precepts of his law; and it is as much our duty to believe the one as to obey the other. And if we may, to any extent, dispense with the belief of the one and hold its opposite, without incurring church censure, to an equal extent we may disobey the other and not be held censurable.

Now, the scriptures inform us that "All manner of sin and blasphemy shall be forgiven unto men; but the blasphemy against the Holy Ghost shall not be forgiven unto men." From them we also learn, that none of the sins of the reprobate will ever be forgiven. Therefore, if all manner of sin, with the one exception, be forgiven unto men, they must be forgiven to believers, to those who hold, in reality, the essentials. Now, let it be borne in mind, that none are to be suspended from the communion of the church for error in doctrine, according to the principles which we are opposing, except those whom the widest stretch of charity cannot judge to be Christians, as they reject the very essentials. Accordingly, should any person in the communion of the church fall into any sin, the court to whom it would belong to take cognizance of his conduct would have to inquire into the nature of his sin, and if it came under the character of those which may be forgiven by God, the individual, notwithstanding his fall, in the judgment of charity, must be considered a Christian; and so, to run a parallel with the doctrine of non-essentials, which excludes none whom we dare not say are not Christians, to be consistent, neither should this individual be suspended. But if, on the other hand, they should ascertain what they do of those who reject the essentials, that they cannot possibly be Christians, it will be from the nature of their crime, and that because they have sinned the unpardonable sin; for by no one sin which an individual may commit may we come to the conclusion that he is not a Christian, except we ascertain it to be the sin against the Holy Ghost. And so these, like those who reject the essentials, are only to be suspended. Therefore we see, according to the system of essentials and non-essentials, that no person should be suspended from the communion of the church for any one sin except the sin against the Holy Ghost. And, farther, we may see that the business of church courts, according to this system, to follow it out to its full extent, would not be to deal with straying Christians, but to separate between true believers and hypocritical professors; to judge of men's state more than of the sinfulness of their practice.

This is deducing consequences from this system, which its advocates will, no doubt, disown and utterly disavow. They are consequences, however, from which it is impossible for them fairly to disentangle the doctrine. And if there be any reality in ideas, if there remain any desire in the erroneous mind to have a complete and consistent system of principles, it is the awful vortex into which the NO CREED and NON-ESSENTIAL PROFESSORS are imperceptibly sliding.

The second step necessary, in order to prove that occasional hearing is sinful, and according to our method, was to show the inconsistency and the sin of hearing our own ministers preach, while under the censure of suspension.

Should any minister of the Associate Church embrace any error in opposition to the principles of our profession, it is the duty of the court to whom he belongs to take cognizance of his conduct, to deal with him according as the scriptures direct, in order to reclaim him from his errors. And if these means prove ineffectual, it then becomes their duty, as has been proved, to suspend him from the privileges of the church and from the exercise of his office. And this is, by far, a more solemn act than many professors seem to consider it, if we may judge of their views by the indifference and the disregard which they manifest to this censure, whether it affects themselves or others. It would appear that such persons do not consider that God himself is the author of church government, and that he has appointed this manner of dealing with his erring people, in order that they may be reclaimed: nor that the means appointed are adequate to the end for which they were designed, in every case where they find the offender in a proper frame of mind. Now, when a court suspends a minister from the communion of the church and from the exercise of his office, by that act they declare that such a one ought not to preach. And if he ought not to preach, the inference is unavoidable, we ought not to hear him if he should preach. To this the writer is aware that some dark minds have objected that, by the act of suspension, courts do not say that the individual suspended ought not to preach, but do thereby only declare that they will not be responsible for his errors, and that the whole responsibility, henceforth, rests on the individual himself. And this, no doubt, is true as far as it goes, but it is not the whole truth. For, if the practice of all denominations of Christians may be taken for what they mean by suspension, they, at least, say, by such act, that the person suspended SHALL not preach in THEIR communion. And in this course of conduct they are borne out by that passage already quoted, (Rev. ii. 20,) where fault is found with the church of Thyatira for suffering that woman Jezabel to teach, &c., which could only mean, as has been shown, in their communion. Now, if the suspension be just, and we have all along supposed it to be so, then "what is bound on earth is bound in heaven." And it cannot be the individual's duty to leave the denomination from whose communion he has been suspended and join any other, or set up independent, on account of a just censure. Therefore, as he cannot preach in his own communion, and should not in any other, it is conclusive he ought not to preach. But, farther, should it still be insisted that we may hear our own ministers preach while under suspension, I would ask, why not as well receive baptism and the Lord's supper, when dispensed by them, as hear them preach? Surely nothing stands in the way, in either case, but the act of suspension. But as there is nothing too wild and inconsistent to be believed in these degenerate days, perhaps some may be disposed to say that we may consistently do both. But if it be right for one to act on such principles, it is right for all; and if all should act thus, what would become of the act of suspension? It loses all its mean-

ing; and would be, at best, but solemn mockery—a trifling with high and holy things.

Although these arguments are judged conclusive, there are other views of the subject, which it may not be improper to take, which will discover, still farther, the sin and inconsistency of those who would either hear our own ministers while suspended, or those of other denominations, who stand in the same relation to us as our own do while under suspension, as, I trust, I shall be able to prove in the sequel.

One prominent feature in the character of the church, and which is very plainly asserted both in the Old and New Testament, is, that she is God's witness. "I, even I, am the Lord; and besides me there is no saviour. I have declared, and saved, and I have showed, when there was no strange God among you: therefore ye are my witnesses, saith the Lord that I am God." (Isaiah xliii. 11, 12.)

Again: "ye shall be witnesses unto me, both in Jerusalem and in all Judea, and in Samaria, and unto the uttermost parts of the earth." (Acts i. 8.) Now the particular point, I apprehend, on which the church's testimony is more immediately to bear, is, What are the truths of God's word? And, in considering this question, our minds are naturally carried back to the commencement of the controversy in which God's people are called in to bear testimony.

When God had created our first parents, he placed them in the garden of Eden, forbidding them to eat of the tree of knowledge of good and evil; and threatening that in the day they ate thereof, they should surely die. This plain declaration the serpent contradicted, and said, "ye shall not surely die." And our first parents disbelieving God, and believing the serpent, ate and fell, the awful consequences of which bears unequivocal testimony that God will be true, should all his creatures prove liars. And here it is worthy of remark, that as man fell by disbelieving God's threatening, so he will have him restored to his favour, through a belief of his promises in Christ. It is the duty, therefore, of the church to adopt for her profession all the truths of the scriptures, in opposition to every error. And this is her testimony in God's behalf, to sinners, that these are his truths. The only principles through a belief and practice of which they can be saved and sanctified: and that all opposite doctrines are only contradictions of that old serpent, who said to our first parents; "ye shall not surely die, ye shall be as gods," &c. He thus deceived them into apostacy, and now by the same means would cheat their offspring out of salvation. Now when individuals are suspended from the communion of the church, for errors in doctrine, this is testifying to them that neither we, nor they, can have fellowship and communion with God on such principles: for if truth has a sanctifying influence, error must have the reverse, and if truth be light, error must be darkness; and "what fellowship hath righteousness with unrighteousness? And what communion hath light with darkness?" If a minister then whom we had suspended, should still persist in preaching, after we had thus testified that we could not hold communion and fellowship with him in our church, on account of his errors, by what rules of logic can it be shown that we can have fellowship with him in his preaching? If we could not walk together in one church, because we were not agreed; how can

we walk together in different churches, and still not agree? And as it is with individuals, so it would be with whole congregations or communities, whom we might have cause to suspend; as they are but composed of individuals. And should we turn again to such, and they not return again to us, it would be either a disregarding of our own act of suspension or saying that such act was undeserved; and thus in one of two things, we would be witnesses against ourselves.

The greatness of the sin of hearing our ministers preach while under just suspension for error, may be still farther seen from the severity of judgments which God visited on individuals, who had disobeyed similar rules of church order.

Nadab and Abihu, the sons of Aaron, "offered strange fire before the Lord, which he commanded them not. And there went out a fire from the Lord, and devoured them; and they died before the Lord." Now the natural properties of all fire are the same, however obtained: and the fire that Nadab and Abihu offered would have answered the purpose of burning incense, just as well as the fire from off the altar; but the Lord commanded it not. And therefore they died for their trespasses. And so a minister under suspension, could preach just as good a sermon after he was suspended as he could before, and "why not," as some confidently ask, as though the question were unanswerable, "hear a good gospel sermon any where?" To which it can be pertinently replied, **BECAUSE THE LORD HATH COMMANDED IT NOT.**

Again, when David would bring up the ark of God, from Kirjath-Jearim to the place which he had pitched for it, instead of having it borne on the shoulders of the Levites, he in imitation of the Philistines placed it on a new cart, which Uzzah and Ahio drove. But when they came to a certain place on the road the oxen stumbled, and Uzzah apprehending that the ark was in danger of falling, put forth his hand, (very prudently, as some might judge,) and took hold of the ark to steady it. But the stranger that came nigh, was to be put to death, and even the Kohathites who were to bear the tabernacle were commanded not to approach it till covered, nor to "touch any holy thing, lest they die." "Therefore the anger of the Lord was kindled against Uzzah; and God smote him there for his error; and there he died, by the ark of God." Perhaps, some may be disposed to think that Uzzah's punishment, considering the circumstances under which he transgressed, was awfully severe. But let it be remembered that God is just, and punishes none beyond their desert: but what should be still more deeply pondered by us, is, that he is also unchangeable. And if a violation of his institutions in the days of Uzzah was so provoking to God, that it was visited with instant death, a disregard to them now cannot be less offensive. If he has appointed (as I trust has been proved) that those who are irreclaimable in error, should be suspended from the communion of the church; and if when such be suspended, a hearing of them preach would be a nullifying of such act, as has been shown, would not such conduct in disregarding God's order of church government be equally as great a sin as Uzzah's disregarding his ceremonial institutions respecting the ark? surely there could be no more iniquity in taking hold of the ark, to prevent it from falling, than there would

be in holding any other burden, only that the Lord had forbidden it. And so there can be no more sin in hearing a minister preach whom the church has suspended from her communion, than there could be in hearing one whom she has not suspended, only that God, in the order of church government which he has appointed, has prohibited it. Nor have we any reason to conclude that because visible judgments are not now speedily executed against those who disregard his institutions, that he is less displeased with such conduct than he was in the days of Uzzah. Ordinances are more spiritual under the New Testament dispensation than they were under the Old; therefore we have reason to believe that judgments are also more spiritual. And who knows how much of that lifeless spirit, that leanness of soul so universally complained of throughout the Christian world, is a just judgment of God on this generation for their not seeking him in this respect, after the due order. It would be well for us to ponder these things lest we have to mourn at the last and say, "How have I hated instruction, and my heart despised reproof! and have not obeyed the voice of my teachers, nor inclined my ear to them that instructed me."

ART. III.—*Extracts from a Clergyman's Diary.*

BOOK OF PROVIDENCE SHOULD BE STUDIED.

THE word CHANCE, as the world uses it, should be banished from the language of Christians. In this sense, there is no such thing as chance, and nothing happens by chance. (1 Sam. vi. 9.) Call the following circumstances, however, what you will—casual, as some, and trifling as others may deem them—to me they seemed speaking and singular providences. I was preaching, some time ago, from Ezekiel, 2d chapter and 6th verse: "And thou, son of man, be not afraid of them, neither be afraid of their words, though briars and thorns be with thee, and thou dost dwell among scorpions: be not afraid of their words, nor be dismayed at their looks, though they be a rebellious house." As if to give a practical comment on the text, I saw, after I had finished my sermon and had sat down, lying close by my feet in the pulpit, a snake, perfectly still, though, from its glistening eyes, excited and apparently alarmed. It must have lain there during the discourse, as the door of the pulpit was shut in the morning, and after that there was for it no way of ingress or egress. I suffered it to lie undisturbed till the services were over, and then, with the heel of my boot, I crushed its head and threw it out of the pulpit, when the people discovered it to be one of a dangerously poisonous kind. Is not the loathing and hatred which rise in the mind at the sight of a serpent a proof of the divine origin of that word which proclaims that a perpetual enmity should exist between the seed of the woman and the seed of the serpent? (See Gen. iii. 15.) Now, while this threatening refers chiefly to the "old serpent, the devil," on whom eternal vengeance was to be inflicted, and whose empire was to be crushed by Messiah the Prince, still, to show God's abhorrence of sin, the sentence on the serpent, which Satan had used as his instrument in the temptation, literally

understood, has been literally fulfilled. In every part of the world, and in every age of the world, we have thus a striking proof of the truth of the history of the fall of our first parents, and, of course, of the whole Bible.

It has been well observed that this antipathy seems to be strongest in the female sex. It is supposed by some that Eve was charmed with the appearance of the serpent, (and in its mere form and colour there is still nothing to excite hatred,) that she adorned "her neck with its windings, or made it a bracelet for her arms;" and this favourite, Satan used for her deception and destruction. Now, how can the infidel, who denies the Bible, account for the FACT that, in all ages and nations, and by all the descendants of Eve, a perpetual war, a war of destruction has been carried on against serpents? How can he explain that innate abhorrence which rises in the mind at the sight of a serpent, even of the harmless kind; that antipathy which leads mankind to seek its destruction, wherever seen, and even when it is known to be incapable of doing mischief. In the shuddering and horror which creep over him; in the antipathy which instantly and spontaneously rises in his mind at the sight of a serpent, the infidel has, in himself, a proof of the truth of that word which proclaims our pollution and fall, and which, under the threatening of vengeance on the serpent and Satan, contains a revelation of mercy the most amazing, through the death of Christ, the Messiah, the eternal Son of God.

The wicked, as vile, and worthless, and noxious, and fit only for the burnings, are compared, in Ezek. ii. 6, to thorns and briers: yea, in persecuting the ministers and people of God, they are cunning, malignant, and venomous as scorpions. It is grievous to dwell, like the prophet, with such scorpions; to be surrounded by furious, slanderous, and mischievous persecutors and opposers of the truth, who, if they cannot slay the people of God, scorpion-like, seek to sting their reputation to death. And is not the present a "generation of vipers," who, if they cannot openly persecute and destroy, yet, by their "looks and their words," seek to frighten the people of God from their principles; yea, force their way into PULPITS, to intimidate the prophets by wounding their good name, lacerating their feelings, and seeking to destroy their usefulness. The ministers and people of God must tread upon these scorpions; must fearlessly proclaim the threatenings and truths of the living God, whether men will hear or whether they will forbear. And, recollect, it is an honour to be assailed by these scorpions. Some will say that the Samaritan standard of religion is the best: crush not these scorpions; drive them not from the pulpit; mingle their poison with the bread of life; human policy with God's appointments; man's inventions with God's institutions: when the truth is scorned and Zion's cause brought low, such compliances to extend the borders of the church are lawful. Let neither the fear of the power, nor the desire of the favour of the great and wicked of the earth, lead to such sinful compromising. Let the enemies of the truth triumph for a season; let the church, for wise purposes, be crushed, and seem ready to perish under the wrath of the persecutor; let the ark shake, and seem to be endangered; do your duty: deviate not from the pure and divinely appointed ways and worship of God, nor dare to lay an

unhallowed hand, or use a single unauthorized instrument, under pretence of upholding the ark. God will take care of his own cause. He is the Great Lawgiver; and our duty is simply to obey these laws, and leave results with him. Though you dwell among scorpions, He will take care of you and your character. You have nothing to do with consequences. Only be faithful to God, and you have nothing to fear.

Some will say, again, that it is hard language, to call errorists, and men, who, though careless of certain truths, may still be a very good sort of people, and sincere in their own way, by such harsh names as thorns and briers, venomous scorpions, the malignant and deadly seed of the serpent. The truth, to certain professors, is always displeasing; but is it not Bible language? Will you open your Bible and show us a passage containing a soft name for error and sin; rebellion against God. The minister who, for fear of offending his hearers, alters or conceals the truth, what is he? (Isaiah lvi. 10; Gal. i. 8.) The man who, for the sake of popularity, sells the truth; who, for sixty, writes thirty; who seeks to be accounted liberal and charitable, at the expense of Jehovah's word, what is he? (Luke xvi. 1—7.)

Language may not be rightly applied; names may be given to individuals, which are, in the highest degree, unjust. Thus it is a perversion of language to call a friend of the truth, for his faithful adherence to God's cause, a bigot; and a gross errorist, who seeks to change the laws of the Most High, and trample the truth in the dust, a liberal-minded man: and that the spirit of charity, which can look on and smile when errorists deal with the truth as Joab with Amasa, but pretends to weep when the friends of truth refuse to bid them "God speed," or "withstand them to the face." It is a scorpion in the form, a demon in the dress of an angel of light. Scorpions are so numerous in some places as to become a constant source of apprehension and suffering to the inhabitants. Even their bed-chambers are not secure from these hateful creatures, while their provisions and cooking-utensils, touched by these scorpions, often produce vomitings and dangerous diseases; caused, it is supposed, by the poisonous matter exuding from the bodies of these loathsome animals as they crawl over them. Among the dangers of the wilderness, Moses especially mentions the scorpion; and Claudius Alianus tells us that, in Lybia, men slept with their boots on, lest the scorpions should sting them.

And thus, like Lot in Sodom, Joseph in Egypt, Daniel in Babylon, and David in the tents of Kedar, the Christian still, surrounded with thorns and briers, and dwelling with scorpions, as he journeys through the wilderness, will be safe only when under God's protection, and his "feet shod with the preparation of the gospel of peace." (Eph. vi. 15.)

BURDEN OF DUMAH.

ANOTHER circumstance I may mention here. In visiting one of the branches of my charge, at a distance of fifteen miles from my house, on Sabbath morning, the aged head of the family where I had lodged on Saturday evening asked me the meaning of that sin-

gular passage on the "burden of Dumah." (Isaiah xxi. 11, 12.) I replied that I was certain neither he nor any other human being knew that I had purposed preaching on that passage that day: yet such was the fact; and that thus, in public and at large, I would explain it. An interval of six weeks had elapsed since I had been before in that congregation; I had not been lecturing on Isaiah previously, nor had he, in the course of family worship, been reading there. It was one of those singular events which lead us to hope and believe that God the Spirit is applying to the hearts of his people his own word; and it was a comfort to my own heart to think that this text, earnestly sought, I trust, from God, had been sent of God.

ART. IV. *Idolatrous Representations.*

ALL misconceptions of the Divine nature and perfections, may with propriety be considered as idolatrous; because when persons form such conceptions, they "become vain in their imaginations," and "change the truth of God into a lie;" and this is the origin of idolatry, as given by an inspired writer, Rom. i. 21, 25. But the more gross species of idolatry, on which it is proposed to make a few remarks, are all representations to the outward senses, of all, or any of the persons of the adorable Trinity, as of the three persons of the Godhead, by the three sides of a triangle, forming one figure; or by an eye, to represent the divine omniscience, and so to represent the Deity: or of the first person of the Trinity, by the likeness of an aged man, as he is called "the ancient of days;" or of the second person, under the figure of a Lamb, or a child, or a man; or of the third person, under the appearance of a dove. That any who have read the scriptures of the Old Testament and of the New, and acknowledge them to be a revelation from Heaven, should make or use any such representations of Jehovah, that they should bring such a thing into their house, lest they "become a cursed thing like it," that they should not "utterly detest it, and utterly abhor it," as an accursed thing, (Deut. vii. 26,) is truly astonishing: it is, however, no less true than astonishing; and this is done, not only by such as live in spiritual Babylon, that "land of graven images," but even by multitudes of Protestants. If any proof of the existence of such idolatrous representations is demanded, some, at least, of them may be seen in most of the Bibles printed in the United States, for many years past. That such pictures should exist at all, is bad; but that they should be intermingled among the very pages of the divine law, which denounces his judgments against those who make, or use them, is utterly amazing. But thus it was among the ancient Israelites when they made representations of the Creator, and employed them in the high places and groves, they after awhile introduced them into his very temple, as if they wished to banish him from his own habitation. Whether our publishers of the scriptures in this country are bribed by Jesuit priests to introduce Romish pictures into the Bible or not, I have not the means to affirm, but I strongly suspect this to be the case. I have heard of such pictures being distributed gratuitously; and *who* bore the expense of this, un-

less the Leopold Foundation, or some similar institution? Many other books besides bibles contain the representations here complained of, and many parlours of Protestant houses are adorned, or rather disfigured with them.

Oh! if Calvin, Knox, and other reformers were among us, with what fervent zeal would their holy souls be fired at the sight of such things! It is not intended by the writer to condemn representations of mere creatures as idolatrous, such as maps of countries, drawings or other likenesses of men, plants or animals. Likenesses of creatures were made according to Divine appointment, on different things in the temple, 1 Kings, vi. 29—35; but no likeness of a Divine person was ever permitted by the scriptures. Some, indeed, have thought that all likenesses, even of creatures, were prohibited by the second precept of the moral law; but that this is a mistake, appears from the proof referred to in 1 Kings. Some also have thought that it is idolatrous to make any representations of angels, such as representing them with human bodies, furnished with wings. That such representations are false, is very clear from scripture, for the Lord "maketh his angels spirits;" and "spirits have not flesh and bones." True, angels sometimes appeared in bodily form, as to Abraham; but this form was made for the special occasions on which it was used, in order that they might hold converse with men. But as angels in their nature, are spiritual substances, or immaterial thinking substances, it follows that all such representations are, to say the least, useless, just as an erroneous map of a country or a portrait will give persons a false representation of the object, which it is intended to represent. It is as absurd to attempt to convey to the minds of others an idea of spirit, by painting, or sculpture, as it would be to attempt to convey to their minds an idea of taste, or sound, by the same means: but if there be no "voluntary humility and worshipping of angels," through these figures, I do not consider them to be idolatrous.

It remains yet to show that every representation of a *Divine* person to the senses, is idolatrous. The main proof against all pictorial or sculptile representations of God, or of any of the persons of the Trinity, is his own strict prohibition of it. This prohibition was heard amidst the thunders, and lightnings, and earthquakes, at Sinai, and written on tables of stone by the finger of the Universal Lawgiver, that its permanency might be impressed on the minds of those to whom it was given. Ex. xx. 4, 5. Again, in Deut. iv. 15—18, we find the most strict prohibition of all such representations. According to the law, as laid down here and elsewhere, it is rebellion against the Almighty to attempt a delineation of him by any thing that has length, breadth, thickness, or any other property of matter: but it is no less absurd than rebellious; for what resemblance is there between an Infinite Spirit and a small portion of matter, whatever its dimensions and colour may be? Often does he refer to this absurdity, often does he manifest his resentment against such degrading attempts, often does he propose inquiries calculated to awake the dormant powers of reason, to consider the grossness of such conduct.—"To whom then," says he, "will ye liken God? and what likeness will ye compare unto him?" Isa. xl. 18. Since such delineations on matter are false likenesses of him, he denounces them as teachers

of lies, and pronounces a wo on those who employ them as means of instruction, respecting his nature or perfections. "Wo to him that saith of the stone," however beautifully sculptured, or highly polished, "it shall teach." Hab. ii. 18, 19.

But the advocates of material resemblances of Divine persons allege that the Holy Spirit descended on our Saviour in the form of a dove, and therefore, it cannot be wrong to employ that animal as an emblem of him. To this it may be replied,—1. If it be right to represent the Holy Spirit under the form of a dove, because he created that form on a particular occasion, to evidence to men the communications of his grace to Christ, in order that they might believe on the Messiah who now came to discharge his offices publicly, and of whom it was anciently predicted, that the Spirit of the Lord God would be put upon him, it will follow that it is also right to represent the first person of the Godhead under the figure of an aged man, agreeably to the description given of him in Daniel, vii. 9, 13, 22. But 2. it may be remarked, that if the Holy Spirit and the Father's assuming certain corporeal appearances, in order to make revelations of their will to men, would justify men in making such corporeal appearances, to represent them, then the same thing would be prohibited in certain places of scripture and permitted in others to the same persons. Now were this the case, the scriptures could not be inspired. If indeed a dove were a proper representation of the Holy Spirit, then the interrogatory in Isa. xl. could easily be answered, where it is asked, "what likeness will ye compare unto him?" the answer would be, he is like a dove. 3. There is neither a command, nor an approved example in the scriptures, authorizing us to make any likeness of any Divine person; and as the law of the Lord is perfect, to attempt any such likeness is prohibited. Every thing pertaining to a dove, which can be represented by an artist, is the shape of its body, and the colour of its plumage. Now between these qualities of matter, and that infinite Spirit, whose influences were communicated to Christ at his baptism, there is no more resemblance than there is between him or any of the other persons, and the cloud employed in the Red sea, and in the wilderness, to assure the Israelites of the Divine protection and guidance, or the bright cloud, or luminous appearance, usually called the Glory of the Lord, which filled the tabernacle and the temple at their dedication, to assure the same people of the gracious presence of God among them. We might as well say then, that any of those clouds which he graciously condescended of old to employ, to hold communications with his people, is like him, as to say that a dove is like God the Spirit.

Many, who feel shocked at the impiety of representing the first, or third person under a corporeal figure, think, that, since the second person became truly and properly man, and continues such, there can be nothing blameable in representing him under the figure of a beautiful human body, the head being usually, if not always, surmounted with rays of light. It is usually said that the design of such a representation of the Redeemer, is not to worship it, but to aid us in conceiving of him, and to excite our affections toward him. These pleas all deserve a brief notice. It is said then that the design is not to worship them: to this it may be replied, the same thing was anciently, and is still pleaded by the wisest of the heathens re-

specting the images of their gods. What security have we that persons may not entertain undue respect for such figures? Does the experience of the church, for a thousand years past, assure us that no danger of outward worship, to the images themselves, exists? The gross idolatry to which the practice has led in the Greek and Roman churches is a sufficient answer to this plea, and the sight of such an object should raise a horror in the minds of all who pay any regard to the mandate, "worship God." But even when there is no outward worship paid to corporeal representations of Christ, there is the utmost danger of internal worship in the mind being paid to them.

But, again, it is said that as Christ had a human body, a representation of it can be made. It is replied to this, that men have *physical* power to do many things, which they have not *legal* power, or authority to do. Now suppose, that any person could make an exact likeness of Christ's body, whether by painting, sculpture, or otherwise, it is utterly denied that this can be done *lawfully*; if any *Divine* law is alleged in favour of it, let it be cited, and the place referred to, where it may be found. While in his state of humiliation on earth, his enemies had *physical* power to scourge, and crucify his blessed body, but they were destitute of any *legal* power from God. It is, however, utterly denied that any man, or number of men, has even the *physical* power to make a correct likeness of Christ's body, as it was, while he tabernacled among men, or, as it is now, in glory. Though all his apostles, except Judas Iscariot, had an ardent love for him, we never read in the scripture that any of them proposed having his likeness taken, on canvass, in marble, Mosaic, Stucco, Bronze, or other substance, although sorrow had filled their hearts, when he intimated to them his approaching departure from them, as to his bodily presence; and although there were many excellent artists, whose services could have been secured, if it had been useful or lawful to do so. His followers were not so poor, that they could not raise among them sufficient to defray the expense of the undertaking, or as he had all power in heaven and earth, he could, as on another occasion, have procured enough from a fish; or lastly, he could have inspired some of his disciples with skill for this, as he filled Bazaleel and Aholiab with mechanical skill for constructing the works of the tabernacle of old. Ex. xxxi. 1—11. Though his apostles had been "eye witnesses of his majesty," and though he exhibited himself to them, alive, forty days and forty nights, after his passion, and he spake during that time of the things pertaining to the kingdom of God, and though on the day of Pentecost they were endued with supernatural powers from on high, and the Spirit led them into all truth, brought all things to their remembrance, of which their Divine master had formerly spoken, and showed them things to come, they seem to have never thought of executing a likeness of their Lord, or, if such a thought ever came into their minds, it was suppressed, as coming from an evil source. Even if the original likenesses, like the autographs of the scriptures, were destroyed before this time, although their destruction would not be a necessary consequence of any of the usual laws of nature, they might have been in substances, which, with proper care, would last for thousands of years, and he who "is wonderful in counsel and ex-

cellent in working," might have employed his providence in their preservation, as he did of old, about the ark of the covenant, so long as it was needed. But even if the originals were destroyed, Providence would have taken care, as in the case of the autographs of the scriptures, that correct copies should be taken. Since therefore no *original* likenesses were taken, there have, of course, been no *copies* taken; and consequently, the modern artist, who undertakes to represent the body of the Lord of Glory, has nothing but his own erring imagination for his guide; and the likeness which he forms, for any thing he can tell, may come as near representing the body of Caiaphas, Pilate, Judas Iscariot, or even of a pagan idol, as it does "that holy thing," which was formed by "the power of the Highest," in the virgin. That our modern artists do err, in forming likenesses of Christ, must be plain to most, if not all, unless one "who has no power to deliver his soul, or to say, Is there not a lie in my right hand?" In proof of this charge of error, in the design, it is sufficient to refer to the rays of light with which they encircle his head. If indeed such a supernatural appearance had been around his head, it is morally certain that the Jews would have known him, and so they would not have crucified the "Lord of Glory." 1 Cor. ii. 8. Of all such attempts then, to represent his body, to the senses, we may say, as the prophet says, of images of God,—*"The workman made it; therefore it is not God."* Hosea, viii. 6. So the workman makes these likenesses of Christ; therefore they are not Christ; nor are any of them even like his body, either now, or at any former time. The last plea or argument in favour of outward representations of Christ's body, is, that they serve to excite our affections toward him. To this it may be answered,—1. That, in order to produce this effect, they should be correct likenesses; but it has been shown already that they are not likenesses of him at all. 2. A sight even of his *true* body was not necessary, in order to excite pious affections toward him, "whom having not seen, ye love;" says Peter, 1 Epistle i. 8, and Christ pronounces them blessed, who have not seen his real body, and yet have believed. John xx. 29. Much less are any of these outward representations necessary to produce faith, or any other grace: since the apostolic age, "faith cometh by hearing." 3. The employment of such means of exciting the affections, seems contrary to what he himself said respecting the expediency of his departure from his disciples, as to his bodily presence, John xvi. 7. "Nevertheless, I tell you the truth, it is *expedient* for you that I *go away*." Those who were favoured with a sight of his body on earth could not discern the better part of human nature, the soul, much less the Divine nature, which dwelt in the man Christ Jesus, these things were, and continue to be to the church here, objects of faith, and not of sense, and indeed the disciples' faith in him as a Divine person was much more clear and strong, after the cloud received him out of their sight, than it had been before. The testimony of the scripture respecting the person and work of Christ, is more to be relied on than even ocular demonstration. 2 Pet. i. 19. Now if men will not believe what has been written by the holy apostles and prophets respecting Christ's human and Divine natures in one person, and what he did on earth for our salvation, they will not be persuaded by pictures or other such means; yea, "they would not

be persuaded, though one rose from the dead." So far are such representations from convincing unbelievers of the truths of Christianity, that they form one of the strongest prejudices against it in the minds of the Mahomedans and modern Jews; they consider that Christians, with images of those whom they call Divine persons, are heathen idolaters under another name. Lastly, the employment of such means of aiding us in conceiving of Christ, and exciting our affections toward him, seems inconsistent with the inspiration of his apostles, or of his being the promised Messiah. It is here assumed that the apostles used no such means, and until it be proved from scripture that they did, it will be maintained that they never did use them. Now, if such things were adapted to promote true religion, the apostles were either ignorant or regardless of their use; and each of these suppositions would be inconsistent with the inspiration of the apostles. It would also reflect on the wisdom, or goodness of their Master, who had commissioned them to instruct others in religion. Why did not the apostles and other primitive teachers of Christianity carry around with them crucifixes, Agnus Dei and other such representations of him whose name they bore; if they would serve the purpose of convincing the heathens, or unbelieving Jews, of the truth of the religion which they recommended, or if they would serve to kindle the graces of the Divine Spirit in the minds of their fellow disciples when they met together to break bread, on the first day of the week or at any other time? From what has been said the plain inference is, that all representations of Divine persons in our possession should be destroyed: this was the law, as laid down of old. It is not meant, however, that we should destroy such as are claimed as the property of others. The reader who wishes to pursue the subject farther, is recommended to peruse a learned work by Ralph Erskine, entitled "Faith no Fancy, or a treatise on Mental Images."

D. T.

ART. V.—*On Preaching from Texts in the way of Accommodation.*

THE practice of using texts of scripture for a purpose, and with an aim, which, however good, have no connexion with the original meaning of the passage so applied, has been too common from the days of Origen to the present time.

No fault, indeed, can be found with the preacher, who, having pointed out fairly and distinctly the meaning and connexion of the words of his text, should direct his aim to the illustration and practical use of the subject to present times and events; and yet much wisdom and much grace are requisite in order to apply, judiciously, the scriptures in this manner. But ministers and preachers of the word are blame-worthy, if they adopt a meaning and use of a text which may please their own fancy at a time, or promise the gratification of curiosity in the hearers, when they hear something new, and in a connexion novel and unexpected. It is not a sufficient apology for this practice, that the truths brought forward are sound and agreeable, as it is expressed, to the analogy of scripture. The question is, What does the Spirit here say to the churches? what is *the truth* here stated? what is the lesson here inculcated? This practice dishonours, though it may be unintentionally, the word of

God, which is a perfect and complete rule of faith and practice, by seeming to insinuate that there are points of sufficient importance to form the subject of a discourse for which no direct or appropriate text can be found; so that one must be torn from its proper connexion and primary meaning, in order to form the ground-work of the discourse. I should rather say, this is to take a text as a mere motto, or as a *peg* from which to suspend certain fabrications of our own.

Another strong reason against the practice referred to, is the handle it gives to infidels, to represent the Bible as a book giving uncertain announcements, and, in fact, making it a *nose of wax*, taking such a mould, form, and direction, as any man's fancy may suggest.

But our subject is large, especially when we connect with it the kindred subjects of allegorizing scripture, and hunting for types and similitudes in plain history, instead of learning from the word as a record of impartial facts, what a sound understanding, and a sanctified heart studying the word with seriousness and devotion, and comparing spiritual things with spiritual, will find to be the truths and lessons set forth for our learning.

I will now give a few examples of the errors I have endeavoured thus briefly to expose. A preacher takes for his text, Isa. xxi. 5, "Prepare thy table, watch in the watch-tower, eat, drink;" which he makes a preparation sermon before the dispensation of the Lord's Supper! while every hearer of the least discernment must perceive that it has not the most distant reference to such a subject, but, on the contrary, is ironically addressed to Belshazzar of Babylon. This is not a fanciful, but a real case of recent occurrence. Another preacher takes the words of Lot, regarding Zoar, "Is it not a little one, and my soul shall live," as a text to illustrate the danger of pleading for indulgence, in certain cases of little sins—to which the text certainly has no reference. The moral rather is, the danger of sloth, and of delay, and of falling short of salvation; though for these important topics a text more direct and suitable may easily be found. I add a third example. I once heard a clergyman give out as his text, Acts xxvii. 28, last clause—"They cast out the wheat into the sea." I could not fancy what he was going to make of it; but, after a little flourish, by way of introduction from the context, he gave us a plain, and not bad, discourse on the sacrifice which must be made of the objects most valuable to the carnal heart, when they happen to come in competition with the value of the soul! Just as "the wheat" required to be cast out of St. Paul's vessel, in order to lighten it, so such a sacrifice requires to be made if we expect to be saved at last! All very good; but methinks a fitter text might have been got for it—such as that striking passage in the Sermon on the Mount, where our blessed Lord enjoins the "cutting off of a right hand," or the "plucking out of a right eye," when they cause to offend. But the preacher was a young man, and he wished to strike.

In some of these cases, I have no doubt, the class of hearers who are least acquainted with the Bible, and whom it is of importance to *rouse*, might be excited to attention, and, perhaps, impressed with the truths delivered, while others might be prejudiced and disgusted.

Now, the former might have been equally impressed and more instructed in scripture truth, had the texts been suitable and agreeable to the context, and the latter would not have been unnecessarily offended. More honour would have redounded to the God of Revelation, and more benefit to the souls of men.—*Edinburgh Christian Instructor.*

[From the Edinburgh Instructor.]

ART. VI.—*Examination of the Principles of Biblical Interpretation of Ernesti, Ammon, Stuart, and other Philologists.* BY ALEXANDER CARSON, A.M., 12mo. p. 258. Edinburgh, Whyte & Co., 1836.

WE really owe an apology to our readers for not having, long ago, introduced this very excellent little volume to their notice. We trust, however, that our neglect has not stood in the way of its circulation, and that most of those to whom we would recommend it are already familiar with it. Mr. Carson is well known as an able and useful writer, and has proved himself to be well acquainted with the philosophical principles of language. He has been induced to compose the present work by the large importation of German criticism which has taken place. That that criticism is highly valuable there can be no doubt; but then, it requires to be used with great caution. The views of gospel truth taken by modern German expositors are frequently very unsound, and almost uniformly defective; and that men's theological views will, more or less, affect their critical canons, or, at least, their application of these canons, is undeniable. Hence a searching examination of the labours of German philologists, for the purpose of showing that they are far from infallible, and that when their doctrines are unsound their criticisms are equally so, is a work which, if well conducted, cannot fail to be highly useful. And that Mr. Carson has conducted this examination with much ability, no one who is acquainted with his previous writings will doubt.

Amidst much that is useful and important in the works which he examines, Mr. Carson detects specimens of an utter confusion of ideas, which is altogether astonishing in men who bring forward Hermeneutics as something possessing all the dignity of a science resting upon well ascertained principles, and all the accuracy of a well understood art. A few instances of this will make the matter plain. Ammon has given a list of difficulties in the way of a correct interpretation of scripture. Mr. Carson examines the whole of them. Referring to one of them, he says:—

"He mentions his sixth difficulty, 'That it is difficult to form just and certain laws of interpretation! and the difficulty lies in this, that the subject is entirely one of probabilities.' This is a German bull. If the subject is *entirely one of probabilities*, then it is impossible to form *certain laws*. This shows what are Ammon's ideas of principles of interpretation. They are not axioms, but something so doubtfully ascertainable as to allow the Neologists sufficient liberty to sport with the scriptures according to the wildness of their fancy."

He then refers to Ammon's seventh difficulty, the statement regarding which is only partially correct; but the blunder of which consists in this, that it is merely a repetition of his third difficulty—a piece of tautology, which a man pretending to teach others accu-

racy should have taken care to avoid. One of Ammon's difficulties arises from such prejudices as this, "That the Scriptures cannot be properly explained without prayer and a pious simplicity of mind." After remarking that this is quite as silly as profane, Mr. Carson asks, how can this prejudice, even supposing those who hold it to be entirely wrong, constitute one of the peculiar difficulties of interpreting scripture?

These two or three instances, out of many which Mr. Carson produces, seem abundantly to authorize his remark, that "Dr. Ammon may be a learned man, but he is a man of a most undistinguishing mind. His want of discrimination is equalled only by the daring boldness of his Neology." His notes on Ernesti, it is observed, manifest as much weakness as wickedness; and in his professed list of the difficulties of interpretation, he hardly ever touches the subject.

But Ernesti himself, though free from Ammon's Neology, seems, when minutely examined, to be chargeable with a great deal of confusion. In laying down his canons of interpretation, he not unfrequently gives, as separate canons, what are essentially the same—one is often a mere explanation or illustration of another; while some are introduced which, though perfectly true, are, also, perfectly useless, and some are quite unfounded. It is surprising to see the small number to which Ernesti's *twenty-four* principles of interpretation, given in his first chapter, are reduced by Mr. Carson's examination of them.

After laying down many principles of interpretation, which make a very blank appearance after passing through the hands of Mr. Carson, Ernesti proceeds to lay down certain rules of interpretation. For this assumed distinction between the *principles* of interpretation and the *rules* of interpretation, Mr. Carson professes himself unable to see any grounds; and certainly the distinction does not seem easy to discover. Ernesti's rules, as far as they are correct and applicable, are just as much entitled to be considered as *principles* as those which he dignifies by that name. They are often, however, mere repetitions, or illustrations; and, in not a few instances, his observations, though they may be correct, cannot, without a grievous perversion of language, be called *rules* of interpretation. But we shall proceed to give some specimens of the manner in which Mr. Carson shows the vague and unfounded way in which expositors are often satisfied to proceed. On the expression, a "*new and living way*," he gives some curious specimens of blundering, in explaining the reasons why the way is called *new*. With regard to the other epithet *living*, Dr. Owen, he observes, says that it is called a "*living way*."

"'I. In opposition unto the way into the holiest under the tabernacle, which was, 1st, by death—nothing could be done in it without the blood of the sacrifice.' No imagination can be more wild than this. It is the *way* that is called *living*, and the way cannot be contrasted with the *sacrifices* offered in order to pass the old way. Besides, there is no contrast, but perfect coincidence, in this respect, between the figure and the thing represented. If the *old way* could not be entered without death, neither could the *new*. Jesus had to die in order to enter into the holiest of all. '2dly,' says the author, 'It was the cause of death unto any one that should make use of it, the high priest only excepted, and he but once a year.' But this is not a reason why it should be called a *living way*. It is the way itself that is called *living*, and it must be contrasted with a way that is *not living*, and not with a way that caused death."

"II. It is living," says he, as to its efficacy; it is not a dead thing, it is that which has a spiritual efficacy in our access unto God.' Here he forgets that the epithet *living* is given to the word *way*. It is difficult to understand what he precisely means by this language. He appears to understand the word in the analogical sense of *efficacious*, which makes it partly literal and partly figurative."

"III. It is living," says he, 'from its effects; it leads to life, and effectually brings us thereunto, and is the only way of entering into eternal life.' But a way that leads to life is not a *living way*. This learned and eminently godly man has given a great variety of reasons for the application of this word, yet he has not glanced at any thing that will justify the epithet in this combination. If it is to be translated *living*, it must apply to the way as a type of Christ; and though it is incongruous with the figure, it suits the thing figured. The way into the most holy place is called living, to fix the emblem in Christ.

"Mr. Stuart prefers the signification, *life-giving* or *quickening*, but says that it may mean *perennial, perpetual*. The latter interpretation, however, the words do not admit. The word *ζωα* never signifies perpetuity. Schleusner, it is true, assigns this as one of the significations of the word; but as applied to water it is figurative, and in such a figurative application it is unsuitable to the word *way*. Spring water, bubbling up from a fountain, or running in a stream, has a great analogy to life, and is called *living* on the same principle as life is ascribed to plants. But there is nothing in a *way* that would justify such a figure. In a road there is nothing like life. But even as applied to water it designates not the perpetuity of the spring. The life of the water is one thing, and the perpetuity of the spring is another. A spring may be perpetual, or it may be occasional; it may live to-day, and it may die to-morrow; and though it should live for ever, the *perpetuity of its life*, and *its life*, are different things; and the latter does not express the former. A spring or fountain is called *living*, not because it flows for ever, but because it flows spontaneously. A river is called *living water*, not because it flows for ever, but because of its apparent self-motion. It is the present motion that is the life. Whether this life is to continue for ever, or to cease, is quite indifferent to the meaning of the word. How many things have present life in the proper sense, which will cease to live!"

"In the application of this word to God, the *living God*, Mr. Stuart is not satisfied with the proper meaning of the word, as signifying life, but explains it, Heb. x. 31, 'as probably meaning *ever-living*, as it commonly does elsewhere, when applied to God.' There is no reason to think that it ever has such a signification. God is called the living God, not because of his eternity, which is not at all expressed in the phrase; but because he has life in contradistinction to all other gods, some of whom have no life at all, and none of whom have life in the same sense as Jehovah has life. Most of them were dead idols; and those of them who had life, had their life from him. As he is called Jehovah because he alone exists, so is he called the living God because he alone has life. All other beings live in him. On the same principle it is said of him, that he 'only hath immortality.' This method, then, of enlarging the signification of words, really impoverishes them. The *Living God* is a more expressive title than the *ever-living God*. Mr. Stuart uses his lever without a fulcrum. He has shown no instance in which the word in question expresses perpetuity. This is one of the innumerable instances in which commentators are misled, by lexicographers assigning meanings without philosophical discrimination. They multiply significations most unreasonably, by dividing things identical, and by conferring on words modifications which they do not express. In this single instance Schleusner has committed a multitude of such errors. With regard to the first signification which he justly ascribes to it, viz: *vivo, I live*, he observes that, in this meaning, it principally applies to the present life of man. Now it is very true that the most of the examples of its use are such; but this has nothing to do with its meaning. Whether it is the life of men or of beasts; whether it is the present or the future life of man; whether it is the life of creatures or of the Creator, the word expresses not."

"The third meaning which he ascribes to this word is, *in vitam redeo, revivisco, vitam recipio*. Now, though it is applied to cases in which the life spoken of was a life after death, yet the word does not express this. There is nothing more asserted than life simply. But if it is known that the person to whom it refers was dead, then it is known, also, that the life is a *new life*, or a *reviviscence*. The examples alleged by him may be all explained on this principle. *Why seek ye the living among the dead?* All that is asserted here is, that Christ is now alive; but if he is now alive, he must have been raised from the dead. His life is a *new life*. In the expression, *though he were dead, yet shall he live*, all that is asserted is, that the person shall live after death. That this is a *new life* is certain, but not expressed by the word. *Αναζωο* is the word which designates the idea which the lexicographers assign to the simple verb. This is a matter of no importance as to the passages expounded, for their import is the same according to both solutions. And this is the reason why such inaccuracies pass uncensured and unnoticed. But it is a matter

of great importance as to the philosophy of criticism: and errors of this kind, in some instances, may lay a foundation for false interpretation." p. 73.

The multiplying of the meanings of words is, indeed, one of the most common sources of error; and Mr. Carson, goes on, at much length, to point out the futility and impropriety of several of the senses assigned to this word. He has occasion to make similar remarks on many other words. To understand words to express what may be implied in the circumstances in which they are used, but which the words themselves certainly do not express, is an error that has often misled even the most acute and intelligent expositors. We, therefore, give another instance of Mr. Carson's exposure of it.

On the precise import of our Lord's words, Mat. x. 40—42.

"For one of the most specious and harmless instances of this error, I may refer to Bishop Jebb's Sacred Literature, with respect to Mat. x. 40—42, 'Here,' says his lordship, 'as in several places of the New Testament, (see, especially, Heb. xi. 31; St. James ii. 2,) the verb *δεχεται* means to receive with hospitality as a guest; a sense demanded in this passage, by the subsequent gift of a cup of cold water, which is selected as the lowest degree of hospitable reception.' Now here are two modifications attached to this word, neither of which belongs to it. The word expresses neither 'hospitality' nor 'as a guest.' It signifies neither more nor less than our word *receive*. What is the peculiar nature of the reception must be learned from the situation and circumstances in which it is used. A person is received at a levee, neither with hospitality nor as a guest. An introduction of a stranger for a few moments may be a reception as an acquaintance. A person, also, is received, when he is recognised in the character in which he is presented. Thus an ambassador is received at court. The nature of the reception depends on the character in which a person comes. A teacher is received, when he is acknowledged and submitted to as a teacher. But the word *receive* expresses none of these modifications of reception, though it applies to all. With respect to the passage in question, to confine the reception to *hospitality as a guest*, excludes other ways in which reception is manifested. Were these messengers of the Lord received by none but those who gave them hospitable reception in their houses? Did not every one receive them who submitted to them as teachers? Many who received them might not have an opportunity of giving them even a cup of cold water. But, to be received, they must be received in every way in which they need reception; and they are received when they are admitted for the Lord's sake, in the character in which they present themselves.

"The bishop, indeed, asserts, that to receive with *hospitality as a guest*, is a sense demanded in this passage by the subsequent gift of a cup of cold water. But this circumstance makes no such demand. Might not our Lord, after speaking of reception in its most general sense, give an illustration from the lowest degree of hospitable reception? The word includes reception as a guest in its general signification, but does not specifically express it. The example relied on by the bishop for confirmation, refutes his opinion. Rahab received the spies, but gave them not even a cup of cold water. She admitted them into her house, hid them, and dismissed them in secrecy.

"Olearus and Schoetgen,' says the bishop, 'by no means entered into the spirit of the context, when they assigned as the meaning of *δεχεται* to hear, to obey, to believe a teacher's word.' The fault of these writers is precisely the fault of the bishop himself. They make a general word express the idea with a specification. To hear, or obey, or believe the apostles is as truly included in receiving them, as to receive them with *hospitality in their houses*. But why confine the word to any one specification, when it includes all equally?

"Dr. Doddridge,' says the bishop, 'translates it, *entertains*: a word too familiar and undignified.' Yes, and a word which has still a worse fault, it is too specific. It confines to one mode of reception, a word inclusive of all modes of reception. A prophet may be received in the name of a prophet, by many who have no houses to entertain him. All these translations have the same fault. They aim at specification, according to what is most suitable to fancy, instead of rendering the term by the general word which corresponds to it.

"Our English verb *receive*,' continues the bishop, 'is a just representation of the original.' And if so, why does he add a specification? Why not translate by the word *receive*, without any thing to restrict it? Why, instead of *receive*, does he use *receive with hospitality as a guest*?" p. 228.

Mr. Carson goes on, at considerable length, to show how widely the Bishop errs in his illustrations of the passage. Very similar are his remarks at page 257, with which we close our quotations.

On the proper meaning of the term χάρις: "grace."

"That a general word designates expressly every thing included in the range of its meaning is a false canon, under the authority of which interpreters assign, as different meanings, what are merely different particulars. All the particulars agree in meaning, so far as they are expressed by the general word; as they differ from each other, the general word does not at all designate them. As to their general nature, they have all the same family name; as to their peculiar meaning, each has its own distinctive appellation. The general word belongs to them, as they are distinguished from other things, but it does not distinguish them from one another. 'The nature of the subject,' says Mr. Stuart, 'in innumerable places, helps to define which meaning of a word the writer attaches to it, in every particular passage. E. G. χάρις is pardon of sin, divine aid, temporal blessings, &c.; which of these senses it bears in any particular passage, is to be determined from the nature of the subject.' Here the writer considers pardon of sin, divine benevolence, &c., as different meanings of the word χάρις. The word, indeed, includes them all, but it designates none of them. Pardon of sin is an instance of grace or favour; but grace or favour is not pardon of sin. Divine benevolence is an instance of grace, but grace never signifies divine benevolence. Divine aid is an expression of grace, but grace never signifies divine aid. Temporal blessings are an expression of grace or favour; but grace never designates temporal blessings. With the peculiar differences of these things the word χάρις has no concern. It expresses nothing but that in which they all agree. A Lexicon that would assign meanings to words on this principle, would be a very unphilosophical work, and would confuse the learner rather than assist him. Ignorance on this point is one of the causes of the multiplication of meanings in Lexicons utterly beyond what is necessary or useful. We might as well say that the word *animal* sometimes signifies a horse, sometimes a man, sometimes a lion, &c., as say that χάρις has the significations assigned by Mr. Stuart. As *animal* includes all living creatures, but designates none, so χάρις includes every expression of favour, but distinguishes none of them from each other."

These extracts will distinctly show the nature of the information to be derived from Mr. Carson's work. On almost every principle connected with sound biblical interpretation, his remarks are characterized by great acuteness, philosophical accuracy, and strong good sense. Every biblical student will find the work a most valuable addition to his theological library; and he will find it a most powerful safeguard against being misled by the plausible theories, or pompously displayed erudition of commentators.

We are not of the number of those who estimate verbal criticism very highly. Its powers are rather of a negative than of a positive kind. It would be absurd to suppose that any doctrine of importance were left to depend for its full establishment upon the niceties of verbal criticism. If any doctrine were expressed so rarely, or so obscurely, in Holy Scripture, as to rest entirely upon a particular meaning assigned to some particular word, we should hardly think it an object demanding very great attention.

But neither are we of the number of those who would dismiss verbal criticism as altogether useless. If it be of little value in investigating or establishing truth, its powers in putting down error, exposing heresy, and refuting objections, are often resistless. The sacred writers composed their works in a plain popular style, so that the simplest reader, even of the most imperfect translation, provided he be honest, will not fail to find every doctrine of importance. For it happily so happens, that the most important doctrines are taught in the form of facts, alike intelligible to all, and which no power of verbal criticism can set aside. Whenever, therefore, we meet with any party who, to establish their system, must have recourse to a

new translation, we feel assured that that system has really no foundation in the Bible; for no translation, if it be not outrageously dishonest, can set aside the great leading facts; and, these admitted, the doctrines remain secure.

When, however, attempts are made to pervert or obscure any doctrine, the power of verbal criticism in detecting and exposing the attempt is often of the very highest value. And whatever be its real value, it is now so commonly employed, that he who would satisfactorily expound scripture, or read the expositions of others intelligently and profitably, must, of necessity, be acquainted with it. Moreover, when we reflect that a correct explanation of scripture must depend upon a correct view of its grammatical meaning, we must admit that an intimate acquaintance with the languages in which it is written seems quite indispensable to the expositor. We would listen with much respect, and, probably, with thorough conviction, to the general reasonings of a man in support of a doctrine, while we would pay little regard to his exposition of any particular verse in support of it. Many a man of little critical knowledge has proved an able advocate of the truth, though such a man cannot, from his own resources, be an able expounder of scripture.

To produce a good Lexicon requires powers which, probably, no man possesses. Even to consult a Lexicon profitably and intelligently is not quite so simple a matter as inexperienced scholars are apt to think. Le Clerc, if we recollect right, observes of Hammond, that he consulted Lexicons much, and to little purpose. Carson will enable his readers to consult Lexicons and commentators safely and profitably; and doing this, he has performed a task for which the thanks of every scholar are due to him.

ART. VII.—*On the Italic Additions in our Version of the Scriptures.*

TO THE EDITOR OF THE CHRISTIAN INSTRUCTOR.

SIR,—I am a great admirer of our authorized version of the sacred scriptures. There is a majesty and simplicity about it altogether unrivalled. In reading any of the commentaries on the Bible, one easily distinguishes the language of the text from that of the commentator by the superiority of its style. I cannot speak, however, in the same terms of the supplements which every where abound. They were designed, no doubt, to elucidate the meaning of the original, but I scarcely know an instance in which the text would not be more expressive without the supplement. The language might not perhaps be considered so good, but it would be more emphatic. And there are many instances in which the supplement gives a wrong meaning, or at least, one that is very perplexing. In the 14th verse of the lxxviii. Psalm, according to the supplement, the Almighty's scattering kings is said to be *white* as snow in Salmon; an idea which has cost many an expositor, both ancient and modern, much ado to illustrate; and I do not wonder at it, for it is no easy task to trace a resemblance between God's scattering kings, and whiteness. I know it is attempted to

be done by a reference to the justice of the transaction, but I have never either seen or heard it done in a way that was satisfactory to my mind. But if the word *white*, which is the supplement, as is indicated by the different manner in which it is printed, is left out, and the verse is read without it, we have a figure which is at once intelligible and most expressive. God's scattering kings in Salmon is compared to the scattering of snow in Salmon; in other words to driven snow, or drift, than which it is not possible to conceive a juster or more emphatic representation. "When the Almighty scattered kings in it, it was as snow in Salmon."

Another instance of the injurious effect of the supplement occurs in the 19th verse of the xxvi. chapter of the prophecy of Isaiah: "Thy dead men shall live, together with my dead body shall they arise;" these are supposed to be the words of Christ to his Church and people, to comfort them under the trials lamented in the preceding verses, and must be considered as extending ultimately to the resurrection of the dead. The words assure them that their dead shall live, and that they shall arise with Christ's dead body, intimating that the resurrection of the body of Christ from the state of the dead is at once a pledge, an earnest, and a pattern of their resurrection: much the same with what is said in 1 Thess. iv. 14: "If we believe that Jesus died and rose again, even so them also which sleep in Jesus will God bring with him." Now all this is truth, and it is encouraging and comforting truth, but it is not the truth of the text under consideration, nor is it so full of comfort as the truth in the text, as will be evident at first sight, by reading it without the supplements. "Thy dead shall live, my dead body shall they arise," declaring not only the certainty of their living and rising in, or with, or like Christ, but farther that they are his body. They are his body even while dead; "*my dead body*." Death does not dissolve, or interrupt, the connexion or relationship between him and them. It continues in the grave, where they "sleep in Jesus," as well as both before and after death, and it is as his body that they shall arise.

An instance from the New Testament, which was noticed, I believe, some years ago in the Instructor, may be found in Matt. xx. 23, and Mark x. 40. In the answer of our Lord to the mother of Zebedee's children, he is made to say, "But to sit on my right hand and on my left, is not mine to give; but it shall be given to them for whom it is prepared of my Father;" implying that it was not his prerogative to give the privilege of sitting on his right and left hand, but that it would be given by some other, perhaps his Father, to them for whom it was prepared. Now such is not the meaning of the text. It is designed to assert that it *is* his prerogative to give the privilege to sit on his right and on his left hand; not indeed, to any one, but to them for whom it is prepared of his Father. Nevertheless, it is his to give, and this is clearly, though shortly, expressed by the passage, if the supplement is left out: "But to sit on my right hand and on my left, is not mine to give, but for whom it is prepared of my Father."

But there are other passages where there are no supplements, and which are well enough rendered, the true meaning and full force, and beauty, of which are frequently lost by inattention. The misquotation of them indicates that men do not draw from them all the

instruction and comfort which they are calculated to impart. The beautiful promise in Hosea xiv. 4, is often recited, and sometimes even printed thus: "I will heal their backsliding, I will love them freely: for mine anger is turned away from them." Even Krummacher, in the beginning of his sermon on the dew of Israel, refers to it in this way, whereas it is, "mine anger is turned away from him." Who the person is that is thus referred to, towards whom the Lord's anger was once turned, but from whom it is now turned away, and what improvement this makes upon the passage, no Christian needs to be told.

A similar turn of expression brings out a corresponding doctrine in Psal. lxxxix. 30—33.

CRITICUS.*

ART. VIII.—*Auchterarder Case.*

THE Commission of Assembly sat on the 14th and 15th August, and was remarkably well attended. The case which excited the deepest interest was that of Auchterarder, brought up for advice from the Presbytery. It appeared that the Court of Session had not issued a formal 'order' on the Presbytery to proceed to take Mr. Young on trials with the view of his settlement as minister of Auchterarder; but they had done what in a moral estimate was tantamount to this; the Lord Ordinary had found by a solemn interlocutor that the Presbytery were 'bound and astricted' to take him on trials, and that they "ought" to do so. Had the Presbytery felt themselves clear as to the line of duty in the case, they would have cheerfully complied, whether the interlocutor had assumed the form of a peremptory order or not. Such an order, indeed, no civil Court *can* be entitled to issue. It belongs to the superior Church Courts alone to issue peremptory precepts to their inferiors, and such precepts were quite familiar to the practice of the Assembly and Commission some fifty, or sixty, or seventy years ago. In the present instance it does not appear that the Presbytery of Auchterarder found any peculiar *difficulty* in the matter, the minds of the majority being made up as to the line of conscience and of duty; but the case was in substance referred *simpliciter* to the Commission, as being one of general interest to the Church, and one in which the Presbytery had all along acted by, and with advice from, the Supreme Court. It was frivolous, therefore, to make any objections to the reception of the reference, and *in fact*, the Commission, in place of giving "advice," settled the matter by finding it "incompetent," and "a contravention of the fundamental laws of the Church" permanent to entertain the idea of proceeding to the settlement of Mr. Young, and they prohibited the Presbytery from taking any steps thereanent. Dr. Cook made the motion for an injunction on the Presbytery to take him on trials; Dr. Gordon moved in the terms which carried; and the issue has been a final rejection of the presentee by a sweeping majority of 104 to 23! It is important to remark that the proportion of lay-elders in the division is 41 to 9! thus demonstrating the deep feeling of the influential lay-members of the vital interests involved in the decision.

It did not surprise us that Dr. Cook, Dr. Bryce, and others of the clerical members, resisted with all their might, first, the reading, or noticing at all, of Lord Belhaven's letter to the Moderator; next, the insertion of it in the minutes; and lastly, its being allowed to be marked as received, and ordered to be kept *in retentis*. But we must characterize the resistance as favouring of partisanship, and keen hostility to the rights of the Christian people of Scotland, rather than of zeal for exact points of form. These gentlemen are quite familiar with the letters of a certain Mr. Buller, formerly secretary to the Privy Council, addressed to successive "Moderators of the Church of Scotland," enjoining the form of prayers for the Queen, or such like matters, with which the Privy Council had no sort of concern; but *when* did Moderate men object to such communications, on the ground that the Moderator *ceased to be*, so soon as the Assembly rose? And as for the Commissioner, we do not pretend to say definitely *at what hour* his official status ends. We are not quite sure that he might not come personally into, yea, even the Commission! and take his seat as representative of her Majesty in that Court, as well as in the Assembly. And as all *rejected* members are added to *that* Court, how would it do to add the name of the Commissioner too, particularly when he happens, as in the present case, to be an elder of the Church? But leaving this to the serious consideration of the great doctors, we see no reason why a letter from the *late* Commissioner, (if he *must* be so designated,) acknowledging the receipt of certain matters intrusted to him, (such as petitions to the legislature,) and intimating his procedure regarding them, should not have been read to the Court and engrossed in its minutes. If such has not been the practice, it *ought* to be the practice hereafter; and let us say, as Dr. Singer said, on a remarkable occasion, when the same argument was resorted to, "Sir Robert, if you please, *we shall make a precedent.*" One other glaring inconsistency we shall notice, and it belongs to the popular men, as they are called, as well as the Moderates. Mr. Monteith moved thanks to the Commissioner for his attention to the interests of the Church, and this was *unanimously* (and very properly) responded to; while with nearly the same unanimity, it was resolved not to insert the letter, *on which only* could any claim to the thanks of the Assembly be grounded! As to the probability of nothing after all being done, so strongly urged by Dr. Cook; we say, first, that there is no probability at all in such a supposition; and secondly, that if there were, the existence on our records of such a document as the Commissioner's letter, would put the Church, in all time coming, in a most advantageous position for urging a measure of such vital importance to her best interests.

The debate on the Auchterarder case was, with the occasional interruptions of a splendid *set down* by Mr. Monteith, and the ordinary blundering on the part of Dr. Bryce, rather a dull one. It could not be otherwise. The ground had been pre-occupied, and the real question was confined within very narrow limits. The only feature in the debate which we think it proper to notice, and we do it with deep regret, is the line of argument which was taken up by Dr. Muir and his supporters, and in which they were ably answered by Mr. Dunlop and Mr. Candlish. This was a sort of *episode* to the

main argument; for Dr. Cook and the regular Moderates did not attempt to carry their views to such an absurd length. That "the church" means the *courts* only; that the regular lay-members of the Church of Scotland are to be held as children to whom a tutor must be assigned, and that too on the principle of *their not liking him*; and that the preservation of sound doctrine requires, that non-regenerated laymen shall be denuded of all say in the election of ministers,—these are the avowed principles of this new Puseyite party in the Church of Scotland. We say of such principles, that, first, they are rank Popery; inasmuch as they proceed on the unscriptural and antichristian notion, that the clergy alone are the "heritage of God" (*κλῆρος*;) secondly, they proceed on false assumptions; as if, for instance, the courts consisted necessarily of regenerated men, while the communion tables were as necessarily filled with unconverted persons: and again, as if it were not a matter of history, that errors in doctrine have, in *almost every instance*, originated with ecclesiastics rather than the laity: thirdly, they would lead to the grossest tyranny. Let the Presbyteries be the patrons of our parishes, and where would be the security against despotism and all other evils? We throw down these as the *heads* of our argument; and we want to see by whom the gauntlet shall be taken up. In the mean time, we beg of Dr. Muir that he will be pleased to read over a certain excellent sermon, on a text for which we have a particular partiality: "Beloved, believe not every spirit, but *try the spirits* whether they are of God: because many false prophets are gone out into the world. Hereby know ye the Spirit of God." (1 John iv. 1, 2.)—*Edinburgh Christian Instructor.*

ART. IX.—*An Appeal to the Associate Church.*

DEAR BRETHREN—In the last number we proposed to pay for Original Essays on any of the subjects there named. The following explanations and considerations are now submitted to your attention, as an appeal to your Christian and public spirit, in the hope that you may see the importance and necessity of a hearty co-operation with us in the prosecution of the object in view.

It is believed that the Secession Church in the United States requires a theological literature, in some respects, *sui generis*; and that such a literature is indispensable to her extension and permanency. Her principles are peculiar; she may be said to stand nearly alone on that platform of doctrine, government, and discipline which was laid in the self-denial, prayers, tears, and we may add, blood and treasure of her reforming ancestors. Productions emanating from other sources, however excellent, need, in most cases, to be tinged with the not unimportant peculiarities embodied in our subordinate standards. Every other ecclesiastical body sees and acts on this principle. All foster their own religious literature, though its intrinsic excellence should be inferior to that of others. But apart from this consideration, the principles of our holy religion, as exhibited

in the writings of the great and good men of the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries, are not generally in the hands of the people, and are not suited to the literary character of the age. They should be rewritten.

It is not designed to restrict contributors to the topics named in our last number. They were merely given as a specimen of important subjects suitable to the present wants of the Associate Church. One of those topics, however, is deserving of special attention, namely, *Presbyterian Church Government*. The present exigencies of the church demand a work of this kind. The same want appears to be felt in Scotland. In a recent number of the *Edinburgh Christian Instructor*, we find the following observations :

"It has frequently occurred to me—and I doubt not to many others also—that a popular volume on the scriptural authority of Presbyterianism, is a *desideratum* in the literature of our Church. In attacking the claims of Episcopacy on the one hand, and Congregationalism on the other, the superior authenticity of our own system is continually assumed, while, at the same time, there is not a work of any merit that I am aware of to which we can refer, as exhibiting a full and recognised statement of the reasons we have for adhering to our beloved Zion. The English press is perpetually teeming with productions on the doctrines and discipline of the Church of England, and even the Dissenters are not slow to advance what they consider and call evidence in support of their *chapel* government; but the advocates of Presbytery maintain a most imperturbable silence on all such subjects, neither refuting opponents, nor vindicating themselves. I cannot believe that incapacity to discuss the question on the part of our clergy is the cause of this blameable *reticence*; far less can I believe that it is accounted for by the lack of arguments, either from scripture or antiquity; but I beg most earnestly to bring the matter under the notice of the ministers of our church, and in the mean time would suggest that a series of short and simple papers on Presbytery in your magazine, would be highly beneficial in these days of *propagandism*, both in confirming our members in their attachment to the Church of their fathers, and in arresting the ravages which Romanism and Dissent are making in our land."

It is not supposed the compensation offered can of itself prove a sufficient inducement. Higher motives and aims must operate in the production of writings useful to the church. It was offered merely to express the importance we attach to the subject. Besides the sum is as large as present circumstances will permit. Should our proposition meet with the approbation of the church at large, so as to enlist all her ministers and people, it is our design, if spared, to enlarge the offer for original articles, from time to time, according to the extent of patronage received, till it is increased ten-fold above the present sum. Mercenary motives have not been, and are not now, the moving spring of action with us. A very moderate com-

compensation beyond actual expenses is all that is desired. Indeed we would not go through the drudgery of conducting such a work, a single month, for any anticipated pecuniary reward. The same amount of labour and care devoted to other pursuits, would procure a much more proportionate compensation. During the twelve years of the present editor's former proprietorship of this work, it contributed from five to seven hundred dollars to the Synod's fund by the gratuitous publication of its minutes. And if it can now succeed in calling into active exercise the piety and learning of the church for the supply of her necessities, and become in any good degree instrumental as the medium through which that piety and learning may operate favourably upon the public mind, so as to elevate her character and lay a permanent basis for her future growth and usefulness, the highest aspirations of its editor's ambition will be gratified.

Some of our most gifted ministers are placed in circumstances which compel them to engage in manual labour to procure a bare subsistence;* and thus their services are in a great measure lost to the church. This is an evil to which some remedy ought to be applied. "Thou shalt not muzzle the ox that treadeth out the corn." But in some cases their congregations are weak and unable to give an adequate support. In others, we fear there is a criminal indifference respecting the maintenance of gospel ordinances among them. If our delinquent subscribers will pay their dues, and all make that exertion for the extension of this work, to which as seceders they are in some measure obligated, this evil can, to a certain extent, be alleviated, by enabling us to pay a sufficient sum for original articles, to make it an inducement for ministers, whose salaries are small, to spend that precious time preparing food for the souls of men, which is now exhausted in procuring food for their families. The law of God requires the church to support those who labour in the gospel, and all scriptural efforts which are made with the design and have a tendency to promote the extension of the Redeemer's kingdom. The whole difficulty lies in that love of the world which is enmity to God. This is the real, the secret cause why ministers of the gospel are not supported, whatever may be the pretences; this is the cause why sound religious publications are permitted to languish and die for want of support. We testify against the defection in doctrine of other denominations; and it would be well if the sincerity of our testimony were confirmed by the devotion of a greater portion of our worldly substance for the diffusion of those doctrines to which we profess such strong attachment.

Although we have existed as a public body in the United States

* Should it be said that in this they only imitate the Apostle Paul, the answer is, the Apostle was *inspired*, they are not. Farther, the Apostle claimed the *right* of support for himself and others.

for three-fourths of a century, it can hardly be said that we have any religious literature. With the exception of Dr. Anderson's writings, which are not in general circulation, and some of which are too voluminous and minute in their details for the spirit of the age, a small volume by Rev. A. Gordon, and another by Rev. James Martin, we have none. The effort now making by the Rev. James P. Miller to retrieve from oblivion the history of the Secession Church, and the memories of those devoted men, by whose self-denying labours she was planted in this land, should receive the patronage of the whole church. And we commend his proposal for a second volume to the attention of our readers.

Thus, brethren, we have made you as fair a proposal as our ability permits; and we call especially upon every minister in the body to give the subject the same attention we have bestowed upon it, and act as conscience and duty may dictate. We have only to add our belief that something like the plan here proposed must be adopted, or the Secession Church in the United States will drag out a miserable and almost useless existence, so long as the tide of European immigration flows in upon us, and then expire like the last flickerings of a dying taper. But, on the other hand, if ministers will improve with all their might the talents with which God has intrusted them for the good of his church, and if our people will draw their purse-strings less closely, the Secession may, through the divine blessing, at no very distant day, become the delight and glory of this land; for God has been pleased to build up his church by the use of means and instruments. Almost every other ecclesiastical body in Christendom has slidden off from the foundation of the glorious reformation. And even the few small bodies who have not departed, appear to be straining every nerve to go off as fast and as far as they can carry the people with them. Surely it requires no very great stretch of the fancy to imagine that we hear the Lord our Redeemer saying to us, "Will ye also go away?"

ART. X.—*Convention of the Reformed Churches.*

THE following report of a committee of this body contains the result of its deliberations. We give it without comment, preferring to hear correspondents first.

"Your Committee have felt very sensibly the weight and importance of the subject referred to their consideration. And while a sense of its overwhelming importance, has caused us to approach it with trembling anxiety, the hope, that the judicious disposition of it may, under the blessing of God, exert a happy influence in the accomplishment of the great object for which this Convention has assembled, has encouraged us to go forward. By instituting an in-

quiry into the principles which are indispensable as the basis of union, your Committee do not understand this Convention as giving any countenance to the opinion that any principle revealed in the Bible may be dispensed with, or given up, for the purpose of securing union in the Church of God. If it were possible to bring all the different sections of the Christian Church into one organical body, by the surrender of one single truth contained in the Word of God, we should not feel at liberty to make the sacrifice; nor, on a union secured by such means, could we expect the blessing of Heaven to rest. But while no principle embraced in the system of faith which was once delivered to the saints, may on any account be relinquished, yet it is possible, that principles may have been established as terms of communion in the Christian Church, in relation to which it is at least doubtful, whether they are sanctioned by the lively Oracles. And it is certainly a legitimate subject of inquiry, whether there may not be some such principles, which, for the sake of union among the followers of Christ, might be dispensed with, without any disadvantage to the cause of truth.

"Your Committee would then state generally, that the principles on which the whole Church of God should unite, and which are at once sufficient and indispensable, are those which are revealed in the Oracles of truth. To say that any thing less is sufficient, would be to expose ourselves to the charge of unfaithfulness as witnesses for the truth; to require any thing more would be to bind the consciences of men, where the Word of God has not bound them; while in either case, there would be a virtual impeachment of the wisdom of the Author of Divine Revelation.

"But while this general principle might be admitted by all the different portions of the Church of Christ, there might at the same time exist very serious discrepancy of opinion in relation to what are the doctrines which are really revealed in the Word of God. A creed, therefore, which shall define in a plain and simple and intelligible manner, the way in which that system of faith, once delivered to the saints, is understood, we regard as indispensably necessary.

"On this principle, the Church of Christ has acted from the beginning. At first, the articles embraced in the creed of the Church were few and simple. There being general harmony among the followers of Jesus, with regard to the principles of Christianity, it was unnecessary to define with scrupulous precision, doctrines in relation to which there was no diversity of opinion. But as men, vainly puffed up by a fleshly mind, began to preach another Jesus, whom the apostles preached not, and to teach for doctrines the commandments of men, it became necessary to enlarge the creed, and to discriminate with greater exactness betwixt truth and error. Had this not been done, the Church must have proved unfaithful as a witness for the truth, and would have failed to perform her duty, in endeavouring to keep the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace. But however good and indispensable this principle may be, it is liable to be abused, by introducing into the creed of the Church, as terms of fellowship, matters of doubtful disputation instead of the doctrines of the sacred Scriptures. When, therefore, principles are introduced, as terms of fellowship in the Christian Church, in

relation to which the Bible is silent, or which are conclusions at which we arrive, by a process of reasoning, from the acknowledged doctrines of the Bible, your Committee are of opinion that those limits are transcended, within which the articles of the creed of the Church should be confined.

"But while your Committee suppose that the Church has sometimes gone too far, in establishing, as terms of fellowship, principles, in relation to which it is at least doubtful whether they are sustained by the lively Oracles, and with regard to which, brethren might be permitted to think for themselves, there is, perhaps, no less danger in erring on the opposite extreme. We therefore utterly repudiate the principle, which, after distinguishing betwixt fundamental or essential doctrines, and those which are not such, maintains, that the former are to be held fast, while, in relation to the latter, we are to remain silent. Though it may be admitted, that some doctrines of the Gospel are relatively of greater importance than others, yet they are individually essential parts of a perfect system. If some doctrines may be regarded as the foundation of the Christian system, while others constitute the different parts of the superstructure, it should be recollected that the superstructure is no less essential to the completeness of the building, than is the foundation. Fidelity to her Divine Head, then, requires that the Church should hold fast the faithful word, and not deny His faith; that she should buy the truth, and sell it not. It is not proposed by this Convention to recede from any attainments which the Churches of the Reformation have made; nor, for any consideration, to relinquish any scriptural principle which the Church of God has ever held. But it is our object to distinguish what the Word of God requires, from that which the wisdom of man has superadded to it, that we may ascertain what is the true scriptural basis on which the Church of God should maintain visible unity.

"There have been prepared, at different times, by various portions of the Reformed Churches, formulas of Christian doctrine, which are substantially the same. Each of these formulas may have its own peculiar excellencies. But, among them all, we have no hesitation in assigning the first place to those admirable compends of Christian doctrine prepared by the Assembly of Divines at Westminster, contained in the Confession of Faith, and in the Larger and Shorter Catechisms. Notwithstanding, however, this, our decided preference,

"*Whereas*, The main and ultimate object which this Convention has in view, is the union of the whole Church of God; and *whereas*, there are other departments of the Church which already agree with ourselves, in the maintenance of the general system of truth and order expressed in the formularies above referred to; and *whereas*, it is due to such, that they should be invited to share in the deliberations of a body, whose object is to promote a union in which it is hoped that they will be included: Therefore,

"*Resolved*, That this Convention will not proceed farther in the attempt to determine "the precise principles which are at once indispensable and sufficient as the basis upon which the whole Church of God ought to maintain organical visible unity," until the opportunity is furnished to those other Religious Communities above

specified, to take part in its transactions, in addition to those already invited.

"In order, however, that while we are seeking the union of the whole Christian Commonwealth, we may exemplify union among ourselves, as far as present circumstances will admit; and being disposed to proceed with that deliberation which the importance of the subject deserves, and yet with a steady prosecution of the ultimate object:

"*Resolved*, That *we, the Delegates in Convention assembled*, shall again recommend to the Supreme Judicatories of our respective Churches to co-operate together in Missionary and other public benevolent operations; to correspond by delegation, and to allow of Christian and Ministerial communion among their Ministers and members: All this, under the authority of Conventional law; proceeding upon the principle, that substantial union in the faith and practice of the Gospel, and in attachment to all the attainments of the Protestant Reformation already exists, and with a view to an ultimate union in one organic Body.

THE COMMITTEE.

ART. XI.—*Closing Scene of John Knox, the Scottish Reformer, as related by Dr. McCrie.*

HE was very anxious to meet once more with the session of his church, to leave them his dying charge, and bid them a last farewell. In compliance with this wish, his colleague, the elders, and deacons, with David Lindsay, one of the ministers of Leith, assembled in his room on Monday the 17th, when he addressed them in the following words, which made a deep and lasting impression on the minds of all:—"The day approaches, and is now before the door, for which I have frequently and vehemently thirsted, when I shall be released from my great labours and innumerable sorrows, and shall be with Christ. And now, God is my witness, whom I have served with my spirit in the gospel of his Son, that I have taught nothing but the true and solid doctrine of the gospel of the Son of God, and have had it for my only object to instruct the ignorant, to confirm the faithful, to comfort the weak, the fearful, and the distressed, by the promises of grace, and to fight against the proud and rebellious by the divine threatenings. I know that many have frequently complained, and do still loudly complain, of my too great severity; but God knows that my mind was always void of hatred to the persons of those against whom I thundered the severest judgments. I cannot deny that I felt the greatest abhorrence at the sins in which they indulged, but still I kept this one thing in view, that, if possible, I might gain them to the Lord. What influenced me to utter whatever the Lord put into my mouth, so boldly, and without respect of persons, was a reverential fear of my God, who called, and of his grace appointed me to be a steward of divine mysteries, and a belief that he will demand an account of the manner in which I have discharged the trust committed to me, when I shall stand at last before his tribunal. I profess, therefore, before God, and before his holy angels, that I never made merchan-

dise of the sacred word of God, never studied to please men, never indulged my own private passions or those of others, but faithfully distributed the talents intrusted to me for the edification of the church over which I watched. Whatever obloquy wicked men may cast on me respecting this point, I rejoice in the testimony of a good conscience. In the mean time, my dear brethren, do you persevere in the eternal truth of the gospel: wait diligently on the flock over which the Lord hath set you, and which he redeemed with the blood of his only begotten Son. And thou, my dearest brother Lawson, fight the good fight, and do the work of the Lord joyfully and resolutely. The Lord from on high bless you, and the whole church of Edinburgh, against whom, as long as they persevere in the word of truth which they have heard of me, the gates of hell shall not prevail."* Having warned them against countenancing those who disowned the king's authority, and made some observations on a complaint which Maitland had lodged against him before the session, he became so exhausted as to be obliged to desist from speaking. Those who were present were filled both with joy and grief by this affecting address. After reminding him of the warfare which he had endured, and the triumph which awaited him, and joining in prayer, they took their leave of him drowned in tears.

After his interview with the session he became much worse; his difficulty of breathing increased, and he could not speak without great and obvious pain. Yet he continued still to receive persons of every rank, who came in great numbers to visit him, and suffered none to go away without advices, which he uttered with such variety and suitableness as astonished those who waited upon him. Lord Boyd, coming into his chamber, said, "I know, sir, that I have offended you in many things, and am now come to crave your pardon." The answer was not heard, as the attendants retired and left them alone; but his lordship returned next day in company with Drumlanrig and Morton. The Reformer's private conversation with the latter was very particular, as afterwards related by the earl himself. He asked him, if he was previously acquainted with the design to murder the late king. Morton having answered in the negative,† he said, "Well, God has beautified you with many benefits which he has not given to every man; as he has given you riches, wisdom, and friends, and now is to prefer you to the government of this realm.‡ And, therefore, in the name of God, I charge you to use all these benefits aright, and better in time to come than ye have done in times by past; first to God's glory, to the

* This speech is translated from the Latin of Smeton, which accounts for the difference of style which the attentive reader must have remarked.

† Morton afterwards acknowledged that he did know of the murder; but excused himself for concealing it. "The quene," he said, "was the doare thereof;" and as for the king, he was "sic a bairne, that there was naething tauld him but he wald reveill it to hir agane." Bannatyne, 494, 497.

‡ The Regent Mar died on the 29th of October preceding. The nobility were at this time assembled at Edinburgh to choose his successor, and it was understood that Morton would be raised to that dignity. He was elected regent on the day of Knox's death. Bannatyne, 411, 412, 427. The author of the *Historie of King James the Sext* says, that the regent died October 18, and adds, "after him dyed Johnne Knox in that same moneth," p. 197. But he has mistaken the dates.

furthurance of the evangel, the maintenance of the church of God, and his ministry; next for the weal of the king, and his realm and true subjects. If so ye shall do, God shall bless you and honour you; but if ye do it not, God shall spoil you of these benefits, and your end shall be ignominy and shame.”*

On Thursday, the 20th, Lord Lindsay, the bishop of Caithness, and several gentlemen, visited him. He exhorted them to continue in the truth which they had heard, for there was no other word of salvation, and besought them to have nothing to do with those in the castle. The earl of Glencairn (who had often visited him) came in, with Lord Ruthven. The latter, who called only once, said to him, “If there be any thing, sir, that I am able to do for you, I pray you charge me.” His reply was, “I care not for all the pleasure and friendship of the world.”

A religious lady of his acquaintance desired him to praise God for what good he had done, and was beginning to speak in his commendation, when he interrupted her. “Tongue! tongue! lady; flesh of itself is over-proud, and needs no means to esteem itself.” He put her in mind of what had been said to her long ago, “Lady, lady, the black one has never trampit on your fute;” and exhorted her to lay aside pride, and be clothed with humility. He then protested as to himself, as he had often done before, that he relied wholly on the free mercy of God, manifested to mankind through his dear Son Jesus Christ, whom alone he embraced for wisdom, and righteousness, and sanctification, and redemption. The rest of the company having taken their leave of him, he said to Fairley of Braid, “Every one bids me good-night; but when will you do it? I have been greatly indebted unto you; for which I shall never be able to recompense you; but I commit you to one that is able to do it, to the eternal God.”

On Friday, the 21st, he desired Richard Bannatyne to order his coffin to be made. During that day he was much engaged in meditation and prayer. These words dropped from his lips at intervals: “Come, Lord Jesus.—Sweet Jesus, into thy hand I commend my spirit.—Be merciful, Lord, to thy church which thou hast redeemed.—Give peace to this afflicted commonwealth.—Raise up faithful pastors who will take the charge of thy church.—Grant us, Lord, the perfect hatred of sin, both by the evidences of thy wrath and mercy.” In the midst of his meditations, he often addressed those who stood by, in such sentences as these:—“O serve the Lord in fear, and death shall not be terrible to you. Nay, blessed shall death be to those who have felt the power of the death of the only begotten Son of God.”

On Sabbath, the 23d, (which was the first day of the national fast,) during the afternoon sermon, after lying a considerable time quiet, he suddenly exclaimed, “If any be present, let them come and see the work of God.” Thinking that his death was at hand, Bannatyne sent to the church for Johnston of Elphinston. When he came to the bedside, Knox burst out in these rapturous expres-

* Morton gave this account of his conference with the Reformer to the ministers who attended him before his execution. Being asked if he had not found Knox's admonition true, he replied, “I have fand it indied.” Morton's Confession. Bannatyne, 508, 509.

sions:—"I have been these last two nights in meditation on the troubled state of the church of God, the spouse of Jesus Christ, despised of the world, but precious in the sight of God. I have called to God for her, and have committed her to her head Jesus Christ. I have fought against spiritual wickedness in heavenly things, and have prevailed. I have been in heaven, and have possession. I have tasted of the heavenly joys where presently I am." He then repeated the Lord's prayer and the creed, interjecting devout aspirations between the articles of the latter.

After sermon, many came to visit him. Perceiving that he breathed with great difficulty, some of them asked, if he felt much pain. He answered, that he was willing to lie there for years, if God so pleased, and if he continued to shine upon his soul through Jesus Christ. He slept very little; but was employed almost incessantly either in meditation, in prayer, or in exhortation. "Live in Christ. Live in Christ, and then flesh need not fear death. Lord, grant true pastors to thy church, that purity of doctrine may be retained. Restore peace again to this commonwealth, with godly rulers and magistrates. Once, Lord, make an end of my trouble." Then, stretching his hands toward heaven, he said, "Lord, I commend my spirit, soul, and body, and all, into thy hands. Thou knowest, O Lord, my troubles: I do not murmur against thee." His pious ejaculations were so numerous, that those who waited on him could recollect only a small portion of what he uttered; for seldom was he silent, when they were not employed in reading or in prayer.

Monday, the 24th of November, was the last day that he spent on earth. That morning he could not be persuaded to lie in bed, but, though unable to stand alone, rose between nine and ten o'clock, and put on his stockings and doublet. Being conducted to a chair, he sat about half an hour, and then was put to bed again. In the progress of the day, it appeared evident that his end drew near. Besides his wife and Bannatyne, Campbell of Kinyeancleugh, Johnston of Elphinstown, and Dr. Preston, three of the most intimate acquaintance, sat by turns at his bedside. Kinyeancleugh asked him if he had any pain. "It is no painful pain, but such a pain as shall soon, I trust, put end to the battle. I must leave the care of my wife and children to you," continued he, "to whom you must be a husband in my room." About three o'clock in the afternoon, one of his eyes failed, and his speech was considerably affected. He desired his wife to read the fifteenth chapter of the first epistle to the Corinthians. "Is not that a comfortable chapter?" said he, when it was finished. "O what sweet and salutary consolation the Lord hath afforded me from that chapter!" A little after, he said, "Now, for the last time, I commend my soul, spirit, and body, (touching three of his fingers,) into thy hand, O Lord." About five o'clock, he said to his wife, "Go, read where I cast my first anchor;" upon which she read the seventeenth chapter of John's Gospel, and afterwards a part of Calvin's sermons on the Ephesians.

After this he appeared to fall into a slumber, interrupted by heavy moans, during which the attendants looked every moment for his dissolution. But at length he awaked, as if from sleep, and being asked the cause of his sighing so deeply, replied:—"I have formerly, during my frail life, sustained many contests, and many

assaults of Satan; but at present he hath assailed me most fearfully, and put forth all his strength to devour, and make an end of me at once. Often before has he placed my sins before my eyes, often tempted me to despair, often endeavoured to insnare me by the allurements of the world; but these weapons were broken by the sword of the Spirit, the word of God, and the enemy foiled. Now he has attacked me in another way: the cunning serpent has laboured to persuade me that I have merited heaven and eternal blessedness, by the faithful discharge of my ministry. But blessed be God, who has enabled me to beat down and quench this fiery dart, by suggesting to me such passages of Scripture as these:—“What hast thou that thou hast not received? By the grace of God I am what I am; Not I, but the grace of God in me.” Upon this, as one vanquished, he left me. Wherefore I give thanks to my God through Jesus Christ, who has been pleased to give me the victory; and I am persuaded that the tempter shall not again attack me, but, within a short time, I shall, without any great pain of body, or anguish of mind, exchange this mortal and miserable life for a blessed immortality through Jesus Christ.”

He then lay quiet for some hours, except that now and then he desired them to wet his mouth with a little weak ale. At ten o'clock, they read the evening prayer, which they had delayed beyond the usual hour, from an apprehension that he was asleep. After this exercise was concluded, Dr. Preston asked him if he had heard the prayers. “Would to God,” said he, “that you and all men had heard them as I have heard them; I praised God for that heavenly sound.” The Dr. rose up, and Kinyeancleugh sat down before his bed. About eleven o'clock, he gave a deep sigh, and said, “Now it is come.” Bannatyne immediately drew near, and desired him to think upon those comfortable promises of our Saviour Jesus Christ, which he had so often declared to others; and, perceiving that he was speechless, requested him to give them a sign that he heard them, and died in peace. Upon this he lifted up one of his hands, and, sighing twice, expired without a struggle.*

He died in the sixty-seventh year of his age, not so much oppressed with years, as worn out and exhausted by his extraordinary labours of body and anxieties of mind. Few men were ever exposed to more dangers, or underwent greater hardships. From the time that he embraced the reformed religion till he breathed his last, seldom did he enjoy a respite from trouble; and he emerged from one scene of difficulty and danger, only to be involved in another still more distressing. Obligated to flee from St. Andrews to escape the fury of cardinal Beatoun, he found a retreat in East Lothian, from which he was hunted by archbishop Hamilton. He lived for several years as an outlaw, in daily apprehension of falling a prey to those who eagerly sought his life. The few months during which he enjoyed protection in the castle of St. Andrews, were succeeded by a long and rigorous captivity. After enjoying some repose in England, he was again driven into banishment, and for five years

* “Manum itaque, quasi nonas vires jamjam moriturus concipiens, cælum versus erigit, duobusque emissis suspiriis, e mortali corpore emigravit, citra vellum aut pedum aut aliarum partium corporis motum, ut potius dormire quam occidisse videretur.” Smetoni Responsio, p. 123.

wandered as an exile on the continent. When he returned to his native country, it was to engage in a struggle of the most perilous and arduous kind. After the Reformation was established, and he was settled in the capital, he was involved in a continual contest with the court. When he was relieved from this warfare, and thought only of ending his days in peace, he was again called into the field; and, although scarcely able to walk, was obliged to remove from his flock, and to avoid the fury of his enemies by submitting to a new banishment. He was repeatedly condemned for heresy, and proclaimed an outlaw; thrice he was accused of high treason, and on two of these occasions he appeared and underwent a trial. A price was publicly set on his head; assassins were employed to kill him; and his life was attempted both with the pistol and the dagger. Yet he escaped all these perils, and finished his course in peace and in honour. No wonder that he was weary of the world, and anxious to depart; and with great propriety might it be said, at his decease, that "he rested from his labours."

On Wednesday, the 26th of November, he was interred in the churchyard of St. Giles. His funeral was attended by the newly elected Regent, Morton, by all the nobility who were in the city, and a great concourse of people. When his body was laid in the grave, the regent emphatically pronounced his eulogium, in these words, "There lies he, who never feared the face of man."

The closing scene, as well as the whole life of this great Reformer, raised up by the Head of the Church at a critical juncture, and sustained through a long and momentous struggle, with a fierce, superstitious people and a Jesuitical Queen, for religion, liberty, and law, almost without a parallel since the days of the apostles, furnishes consolatory reflections for all the truly pious in this dark world; which, in the language of scripture, is a "wilderness, a land of deserts and pits, a land of drought and of the shadow of death." These useful lessons may, indeed, be learned from the example of patriarchs, prophets, and apostles whose lives are recorded in the scriptures. But humble believers are exceedingly prone in a season of distress to look upon the lives of inspired men, as far beyond their imitation, and thus deprive themselves of that support which the sacred records are designed to impart. But in the life of Knox we have a *practical* example, scarcely inferior to scripture biography, of a man who possessed nothing more of inspiration, properly so called, than the weakest believer now on earth. This consideration should cure that unbelief which leaves us only the bitterness of our trials, without any of that substantial good which flows from sanctified affliction. The example of Knox teaches us many useful lessons, some of which may be noted.

1. That fidelity to our covenant engagements with God, in every possible condition, regardless of the sacrifices which it may cost, is the only path of safety, virtue, and honour.

2. That this fidelity will bring upon us the malice of Satan, the

reproach of nominal professors, the innumerable calumnies of active enemies to the truth, and the undissembled hatred of the world. Knox was accused of almost every crime which goes to make up the black catalogue of human guilt. Hated beyond measure by his enemies, and at times, partially, at least, deserted by his friends, for that *severity*, without which his almost incredible services to the church must have been lost. They blamed him for that very harshness which delivered them from the jaws of the devouring beast. "My mother's children were angry with me."

3. That God will vindicate his faithful servants from all the aspersions of their enemies. How remarkable His Providence respecting the fame of this man! After a lapse of about three centuries, a biographer is raised up and qualified to do his memory ample justice. His character has been retrieved from the filth of Popish defamation, and placed on an immutable basis. "The righteous shall be had in everlasting remembrance."

4. That the secret of our present peace with the world lies chiefly in our conformity to the world. The world, ever true to its inherent nature, loves its own; but makes war against the saints of the Most High. The great mass of Protestants in the *nineteenth* century would hate Knox, were he among us, with as much cordiality as did the Papists of the *sixteenth*. Alas! the church has lost her Knoxes and Calvins, and we may say to our countrymen as Dr. McCrie did to the "modern fashionables and great ones" in Britain—"Those days are gone, and will not, it is likely, soon return."

5. That the modern dogma which has been adopted by universal consent, forbidding us, on the pain of excommunication from the society and friendly offices of this generation, to declare the law of God and pronounce condemnation upon all sin, whether seen in private individuals, magistrates, or ecclesiastical bodies, is conclusive evidence of our degradation. The charity of this age is murder to the souls of men.

In conclusion, we have only to express our deep regret, that the lives of Knox and Melville are not *more*, and the writings of Sir Walter Scott *less* read in this country.

ART. XII.—*Doings in Tennessee.*

FROM the Minutes of the Synod of West Tennessee, as published in the *Watchman of the South*, we gather the following particulars. The minutes of the last assembly, providing for the extension of the synod over the territory occupied by the Synod of Tennessee, which had seceded from the Presbyterian Church, was brought up for consideration, and on the report of a committee, the following resolution was adopted: viz.

Resolved, That the synod acquiesce in the foregoing alterations, (with the exception of the change of the name of this synod,) and do hereby recognise the Presbytery of Holston as a part of this synod, consisting of the following ministers, viz. Samuel W. Doak, Andrew Vance, Samuel H. Doak, James H. Lyon, Archibald A.

Mathes; and the following churches, viz. Mount Bethel, Baker's Creek, Rogersville, New Providence, Salem, Leesburgh, Providence, Pleasant Forest, Bluntville, New Bethel, and Rocky Spring.

The minority of the committee (Rev. T. F. Scott,) made a counter report.

The subject was discussed near three days, and before the final vote, which was by yeas and nays, on motion of Dr. Edgar, synod united in solemn prayer to Almighty God, for his guidance and direction, being led in the exercises by Rev. George Newton, and the Rev. Dr. Brown.

The report of the majority of the committee above recorded was adopted by the following vote, viz. Yeas 39—nays 27.

Non Liquet 1—*Excused* 1.

The New-school minority brought in a protest, closing it with an intimation that they could not "maintain their present connexion." This called for the following decided and appropriate action.

A committee consisting of Dr. Brown, Rev. S. M. Williamson, and J. C. Gillespie, were sent out to confer with the minority of synod, to endeavour, if possible, to effect a reconciliation. They reported, that they had been cordially received, but that the brethren were unwilling to accede to any other compromise than the following, viz. "That neither party should acknowledge either the Old or New-school General Assembly, until the next meeting of synod, and that the Synod and presbyteries connected with it, resolve that they will use their best exertions to effect a union between the two Assemblies on the principles of mutual compromise." This report was confirmed by the appearance of a committee of three, on the part of the minority. It was moved, "that the proposition of the minority of synod be respectfully declined," which was unanimously carried.

The following resolutions were then passed unanimously.

1. Whereas, Rev. George Newton, Thomas J. Hall, Wm. Eagleton, Jesse Alexander, A. H. Dashiell, Edward McMillan, Silas H. Morrison, Bedford Ryland, Dr. John Allan, Matthew M. Marshall, Hugh K. Shields, John C. Ewing, Joseph Sherman, ministers; together with James R. Maltbie, Ephraim Patrick, John H. Baxter, D. V. Davidson, John Ramsey, John M. McNight, John J. Montgomery, D. C. Nevills, Wm. D. Baird, elders, have by a solemn protest and declaration, signified to this synod, that they can no longer participate in its deliberations, or submit to its jurisdiction, therefore resolved, that their names be stricken from the roll of synod.

2. Whereas, also, a considerable number of the members of Shiloh Presbytery have withdrawn from this synod, therefore,

Resolved, That the Presbytery of Shiloh be, and the same is, hereby dissolved; and that the limits of the presbytery of Nashville be so extended, as to include the territorial limits heretofore occupied by the Presbytery of Shiloh; and that all the ministers, licentiates, candidates, and churches, belonging to the Presbytery of Shiloh, adhering to this synod, be placed under the care of the Presbytery of Nashville.

3. *Resolved*, That the stated clerks of the several presbyteries be directed to correct their respective rolls in accordance with the above resolutions adopted by this synod.—*Presbyterian*.

ART. XIII.—Convention of Baptists in Vermont.

The (Vt.) Telegraph, of the last date, contains the proceedings of a Convention of Baptists, from different parts of the state, held at Brandon, on the 8th inst. The following resolutions were adopted:

"Whereas, the God of Heaven has said, by the mouth of his servant Moses, 'thou shalt in any wise rebuke thy neighbour, and not suffer sin upon him'—and also by the great Apostle to the Gentiles, 'them that sin, rebuke before all, that others also may fear;' and, whereas, withholding from the guilty the truth, even though they be our brethren, is not a mark of kindness or love to them, therefore, as Baptists of Vermont, in convention assembled, we would kindly, yet plainly present our solemn convictions of truth to our southern brethren, and the world, in the following resolutions:

Resolved, That slavery involves a complication of the highest crimes which it is possible for man to commit—such as robbery, man-thieving, family-sundering, soul-starving, and murder of body and soul, in the most lingering and awful forms.

"*Resolved*, That to commit any one of these crimes, out of the slave states, would exclude the criminal from church fellowship.

"*Resolved*, That all these crimes are, in themselves, necessarily, and under all circumstances, so many direct violations of God's law, and can never be mitigated or modified, in the sight of the Supreme Law-giver, by human legislation—they are therefore no less sin in the slave states than elsewhere.

"*Resolved*, That if slavery were out of the Christian church, its enormities would

be seen in their true light, and they who commit them could no sooner obtain admission to church fellowship, than those who are guilty of other species of robbery and atrocious wickedness.

"*Resolved*, That the *practice*—the *being in the habit* of slaveholding, is no more a palliation for that sin, than the *practice*—the *being in the habit* of lying, swearing, thieving, adultery, and other palpable violations of God's law, are palliations for these sins.

"*Resolved*, Therefore, that the Bible affords no warrant for extending Christian fellowship towards those who are in the sin of slaveholding, and of defending slavery, on account of their having been bred up, and long in the practice of this sin.

"*Resolved*, Therefore, that those who adopt the gospel standard of morality and religion cannot consistently hold in Christian fellowship those who practise slavery, or advocate it.

"*Resolved*, Therefore, that it is the duty of all Christians to labour and pray for the immediate expulsion of this sin from the church, withdrawing fellowship from all who, after due admonition and reproof, will not cease from its practice and its advocacy."

ART. XIV.—*A Request to those whom it may concern.*

FROM the kind reception with which his volume of Biographical Sketches and Sermons, has been so far favoured, and at the solicitation and advice of several of his friends, whose judgment he highly respects, the subscriber has been induced to undertake the preparation of a second volume. In which it is his purpose to continue the history of the Associate Church in this country down to the present time; and, also, to sketch the lives of the following deceased ministers, viz:—

Andrew Arnot,
——— Smart,
Matthew Henderson,
Ebenezer Henderson,
John Cree,
James Pringle,
Francis Pringle, jr.,
James Kenedy,
John Banks, D.D.,
Thomas Smith,

Robert Douglass,
William Craig,
John Wallace,
James Whyte,
Thomas M'Clintoch,
David Carson,
James Irvine,
Thomas B. Clarkson,
Robert Laing,
William Dixon.

The design of the present notice is to solicit the friends and acquaintances of each of these deceased fathers and brethren to furnish the subscriber with such well authenticated facts connected with their lives and labours as may appear worthy of remembrance, the knowledge of which facts may be in their possession, as early as practicable. If no other opportunity offers of forwarding such information, conveniently, at an earlier date, it may, in most cases, be done without much inconvenience at the next meeting of Synod. The subscriber hopes this request will receive due attention from his friends and the friends of the individuals named. It is only in this way that he can collect the information necessary to authentic sketches of their lives, and complete the plan of his book. He is, also, desirous of obtaining specimens of their sermons, in all cases where they can be procured. From the want of such assistance in preparing his former volume, he laboured under great inconvenience, was sometimes subjected to considerable expense and labour in

searching after the information which could be conveyed in a single sentence, and the publication of his book was retarded.

JAMES P. MILLER.

P. S.—The first volume, containing the early history of the Secession and Biographical Sketches, can be obtained of the following named persons:—Dr. Beveridge, Canonsburg, Pa.; Mr. William Bell, Pittsburgh, Pa.; Rev. David Imbrie, Darlington, Pa.; Rev. A. Murray, Portersville, Pa.; Rev. James P. Smart, Massie's Creek, Ohio; Rev. S. Wilson, Xenia, Ohio; Rev. J. M. Henderson, Carmel, Indiana; Rev. G. M. Hall, Sugar Creek, Ohio, and William S. Young, 173, Race St. Philadelphia.

ART. XV.—*Pious Sayings of Good Men.*

SELF-DECEPTION.—Some men talk like angels, and pray with great fervour, and meditate with deep recesses, and speak to God with loving affections and words of union, and adhere to him in silent devotion, and when they go abroad are as passionate as ever, peevish as a frightened fly, vexing themselves with their own reflections; they are cruel in their bargains, unmerciful to their tenants, and proud as a barbarian prince; they are, for all their fine words, impatient of reproof, scornful to their neighbours, lovers of money, supreme in their own thoughts, and submit to none; all their spiritual life they talk of is nothing but spiritual fancy and illusion; they are still under the power of their passions, and their sin rules them imperiously, and carries them away infallibly.—*Jeremy Taylor.*

Christ's ministers must be careful, while they display God's wrath, to conceal their own, and be jealous over themselves, lest sinful anger shelter itself under the cloak of zeal against sin.—*M. Henry.*

If in my preaching I were to pay a regard to Philip Melancthon, and other divines, then I should do little good. I preach in the plainest manner to the illiterate, and that gives content to all. Hebrew, Greek and Latin, I spare till we learned ones come together.—*Dr. Luther.*

Much of the ability to do good, lies in the disposition to do it. The very breathing of a benevolent heart is a species of good-doing.

If the heart be cold in prayer, pray until it grows warm. To forsake the closet because you are not in a good frame, is to go away from the fire because you are cold.

Surely nature is a book, and every page rich with sweet hints. To an attentive mind, the garden turns preacher, and its blooming tenants are so many lively sermons. What an engaging pattern, and what an excellent lesson have we here!—*Hervey.*

Gospel ministers are appointed rulers in the household of God, not as princes, for Christ has entered a caveat against that; but as stewards, or other subordinate officers; not as lords, but as guides; not to prescribe new ways, but to lead in the ways that Christ has appointed.—*Rev. Matthew Henry.*

With a good minister of the gospel, the end of one duty is the beginning of another. When Calvin was persuaded to remit his ministerial labours, he answered with some resentment, "Would you have my Master to find me idle?" Persevere in his work "till the Lord come." "Hold fast till then." "Continue in these things." "Endure to the end, like a good soldier."—*Henry.*

SYMPATHY.—Pray every day for those cases of affliction of which you hear. Weep with those who weep. Cultivate a spirit of holy sympathy. Make the case of sufferers your own. Imagine your dear parents or brothers to be thus tried. Remember that you are in the body and will one day need sympathy. Remember often in your prayers all who are distressed.

"SATAN'S TEMPTATIONS."—I must not pray simply against temptation, though I may against the evil of temptation; for a Christian may be tempted, and yet not overcome: a castle may be assaulted, and yet not taken. If Satan inject an evil motion, and I reject it, this is not mine, but the devil's sin. Why art thou so terrified at the roaring of a lion, as if he could not rage but he must devour? as if grace

and temptation would not stand together? As if the same afflictions were not accomplished upon thy brethren. This is an undoubted truth, that spiritual wickedness is to be found in the heavenliest places; and this is an excellent sign, that Satan takes thee for one that will tread upon his head, when he is so violent to bruise thy heel; and this is a comfortable assurance, that, if Jesus Christ be thy captain to lead thee in, he will be thy champion to lead thee out. For my part, I know that Satan will be always tempting: therefore I will be always watching; and what I cannot hinder, that I will be sure to hate.

THE FOLLY OF PENANCE.—You cannot scourge yourself into the favour of God, nor emaciate yourself into acceptance with him. Men are often willing to do towards securing salvation, more than is required of them, if they but be permitted to do it according to their own mind and in their own manner. They are agreed to strive to enter in at the strait gate, if they may do it in their own way. It is not to the amount, but to the nature of the requisitions of the gospel, that they are averse. They are ready to make sacrifices of property and personal comfort, to almost any extent, if these things may but be the price of their redemption.

ART. XVI.—*Foreign Periodicals.*

OUR acknowledgments are due to the editor of the *Edinburgh Christian Instructor* for his fraternal proposition to exchange with the *Religious Monitor*. We cheerfully accept the offer, and have sent forward the *Monitor* as indicated in his letter. We have also received numbers of the *United Secession Magazine*, the *Edinburgh Christian Herald*, and *Edinburgh Christian Teacher*. For these favours we are indebted to the agency of Mr. JOHN SMITH of Baltimore, who will please accept our thanks, and we doubt not those of our readers. These periodicals contain a variety of doctrinal, critical, and practical Essays with which it is intended from time to time to enrich our pages. We are now provided with materials from which selections new and useful can be made; and a little exertion on the part of correspondents to supply a sufficient quantity of original matter, will give to the *Religious Monitor* a character which it ought to sustain.

TO CORRESPONDENTS.

WE have received another article from "ANTI-SLAVERY." It is entitled to a place, and will eventually be inserted. But as there has been much said on that subject, it appears necessary to give it a little respite. Without a frequent change of dishes, our readers will lose appetite. Would not the occasional selection of some other topic prove beneficial to the writer and useful to the church? This article is not postponed from a disposition to shrink on the subject of slavery. The stand we have taken on that subject has occasioned the loss of subscribers whose place has not yet been supplied by others. If a periodical devoted to Reformation Principles cannot be sustained in the Secession Church without giving the right hand of fellowship to the sin of American slavery, our condition is

worse than we are yet willing to believe. The Monitor has neither *justified* nor *condemned* abolition societies; it has neither denied nor affirmed that preliminary steps are necessary for the abolition of slavery; it has only declared the law of God and the duty of the Christian church. By this declaration it must abide regardless of consequences. To which we may add our firm conviction that the Christian church is more guilty of this sin than the nation. Had every section of the visible church, from the beginning, declared and *enforced* the law on this subject, it is believed slavery would long since have ceased to exist. It would startle even infidels to hear themselves precluded from the possibility of admission to Christian privileges. No institution could long survive such a moral influence in a country only nominally Christian. This is the lever of public opinion after which we think voluntary associations search in vain. But we nevertheless rejoice with them in every inch of ground they obtain in the good cause. If this view be correct, how exceedingly low has the church of God fallen in this land! and where is the enlightened Christian who does not tremble at the prospect before us? "Oh that my head were waters, and mine eyes a fountain of tears, that I might weep day and night for the slain of the daughter of my people!" "Because **THEY HAVE FORSAKEN MY LAW** which I set before them, and have not obeyed my voice, neither walked therein; but have walked after the imagination of their own heart: therefore, thus saith the Lord of Hosts, the God of Israel; behold I will feed them, even this people, with wormwood, and give them water of gall to drink." Jer. ix. 1, 13, 14. Condemning slavery in the *abstract* only, which has become so fashionable, is an invention of the enemy. It is making Christ the minister of sin, by his avowed friends. And Satan cares not how much truth the church holds in the abstract; it is a faithful application of the truth, especially by the rod of discipline, that puts him to flight and his forces to confusion. It will be seen, then, that the article in question is postponed merely because we wish to give our readers as interesting a variety as possible, and to avoid even the appearance of making a *hobby* of any subject.

For the information of all concerned, it is proper to state, that the writer, under the signature of "Elihu," in our number for October, is the REV. JAMES DOUGLASS. We make this statement chiefly to remove suspicions which are operating injuriously against an individual not concerned in any manner with Mr. D's. essay. Mr. Douglass sent his name with the paper, and never at any time gave any intimation of a desire for concealment. He has, in our estimation, no cause to be ashamed of his production, if his statements be correct, of which we know nothing; but which, so far as known to us, have not been denied.

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Rev. S. Wilson,	\$10,00	Henry Carlile,	\$5,00
Rev. D. Thompson,	6,00	J. R. Weldin,	10,00

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